

significant shorts

Union chiefs stride back into corridors of power

After nearly two decades out in the cold union leaders this week strode into the corridors of power, it emerged yesterday. John Monks, TUC leader, held an unpublished meeting with the Prime Minister at Downing Street on Tuesday and a day earlier a phalanx of senior trade unionists broached the issue of employees' rights with Margaret Becket, President of the Board of Trade.

Following the first meeting yesterday of the TUC's inner circle since the election, Mr Monks announced the union movement's Budget submission and welcomed a "substantially changed mood" in Whitehall and Westminster. Apart from the sessions acknowledged by Mr Monks, union leaders have been in frequent contact with the Government over a wide range of issues from the future of the Post Office to the reform of the health service.

Speaking after a meeting of the TUC's executive committee, Mr Monks congratulated ministers for getting off to a "cracking start" by signalling the end of the union ban at GCHQ, the introduction of a minimum wage and the reversion to national bargaining in the NHS. He said: "For 18 years unions have been systematically excluded from playing their proper role in representing their members' interests to government and policy-makers. This has now changed."

Barrie Clement

School nurse cuts threaten pupils

Children are being put at risk by swingeing cuts in the number of school nurses, it was claimed yesterday. The result was likely to be more children and teenagers suffering from mental and behavioural problems or eating disorders, falling prey to substance abuse and getting pregnant, nurses warned. The Royal College of Nursing yesterday launched a major campaign to save the school nurse, seen by the profession as an unsung hero.

The RCN is to press the Government to make it a statutory requirement for every child to have access to a school nurse. Members of the RCN meeting at their annual congress in Harrogate, North Yorkshire, later voted on an emergency resolution on the issue. The RCN said school nurses - who number about 5,000 - were being "picked off" to achieve cost cuts because they were a soft target.

Camelot TV claims rejected



The National Lottery operator Camelot's complaint against a BBC *Panorama* programme in which the Virgin boss Richard Branson (left) alleged that he had been offered a bribe by Camelot was thrown out by the Broadcasting Standards Commission yesterday.

In the programme last December, Mr Branson claimed that Guy Snowdon, head of computing company Gtech and a member of the Camelot consortium, offered him an "inducement" to pull out of bidding for the lottery before the franchise was awarded. Camelot complained to the Broadcasting Standards Commission that the programme acted unfairly because it did not fully inform the company of the seriousness of the programme's allegations before interviewing one of its senior staff, did not allow the company to put its side of the story and edited the programme in a selective and unfair manner. The BSC rejected all of Camelot's complaints.

Paul McCann

Greenpeace in frontier venture

Greenpeace yesterday launched an ambitious campaign to halt oil exploration and production in the "Atlantic Frontier", north-west of Scotland. The deep continental shelf waters are seen as the most promising area for substantial offshore oil production around Britain as North Sea fields run down; already BP and Shell have made discoveries. The environmental group argues that if the threat of catastrophic climate change is to be averted then oil exploration has to cease, because the burning of existing reserves will in itself cause dangerous global warming.

Nicholas Schoon

Off-licence shelves alcopop plans

Britain's biggest chain of off-licences has shelved plans to bring out an own-brand alcopop amid growing criticism of the controversial drinks. The Spar chain, which has 2,200 stores, said a planned range had been put on hold after allegations that the sweet-flavoured drinks deliberately target under-age drinkers.

Lloyd-Webber's £3.5m wine sale

The sale of Lord Lloyd-Webber's wine collection at Sotheby's in London fetched a total of more than £3.5m, smashing the pre-sale estimate of between £2-£2.7m, the auction house said.

Men worn down by thrill of the chase

Relentless pursuit of sex is wearing down the male population and sending them to an early grave, according to a British scientist. After research into a species of nematode worm Dr David Gems has concluded that men could possibly live an extra 13.5 years and the worms could increase their lifespan by two-thirds, if they stopped chasing females. Dr Gems, a geneticist at University College London, claims that although women traditionally live longer, it is really men who are programmed to live further into old age. There would be more old men than old women if it were not for their sex drive, he says in the latest *New Scientist* magazine.

people



BITING HUMOUR: The veteran comedian Jerry Lewis, ready to devour his wife in public yesterday, as he arrived in London to star in *Damn Yankees* at the Adelphi Theatre (Photograph: Reuters)

Britain's Jackson Pollock gives away £1m of art

The artist known as the British Jackson Pollock yesterday donated works valued at more than £1m worth of his works to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.

The gift, by Alan Davie, was made after the gallery was able to buy four of his early works with money from the National Heritage Lottery Fund.

He donated 13 oil paintings and 14 gouache drawings, including several works that are of world renown, because he wanted the "cream" to be kept in his native Scotland.

Alan Davie was born in Edinburgh in 1920, and the works donated include his earliest self-portrait, made when he was 17, and some of his famous large abstract oils on canvas.

During the 1950s and 1960s, at the height of his career, he was regarded by many as the European equivalent of American artists Pollock and Mark Rothko, some of whose colourful and powerful abstracts are prominently shown in the Tate Gallery in London, and command vast sums in the international art market.

Mr Davie said yesterday: "It gives me great satisfaction that a major collection of my work will belong to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art. 'I have been fated all over the world and it does now seem as if I am becoming more appreciated in my own land.'

"In the past, so much of my work has gone abroad, but I have always kept the cream of my work for myself so that it could remain in Scotland."

Patrick Elliott, a curator at the Edinburgh gallery, said: "He is arguably the most important post-war Scottish painter and this is the first time the National Heritage Lottery Fund has been used to buy works by a living artist."

"There aren't that many Scottish artists who are world-renowned, and it will create a lot of local interest. 'He is not only a great artist, but a popular one too. A double whammy for us.'

Six of the paintings are on display at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and will remain on show throughout the summer.

Barbie's new friend is wheeled out

A new member of the Barbie doll family was introduced to the public yesterday - one that uses a wheelchair and is intended to change attitudes about people with disabilities.

"Share a Smile Becky" is the new 11-and-a-half-inch friend of Barbie, who comes in a bright hot-pink wheelchair. The strawberry blonde doll wears a turquoise outfit with a white shirt underneath emblazoned with IDEA, standing for Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.

The doll, made by Mattel, would help dispel uneasiness some people have around those with disabilities, the company said.

Hannah Withers, aged 9, of Springfield, Virginia, who has cerebral palsy, stroked the doll's hair as she sat in her own wheelchair and exclaimed with a big grin, "She's in a wheelchair."

"I was so excited," said Hannah's mother, Tina. "Becky's legs, you can bend the knees. This is something Hannah is working on."

The bendable joints is an exclusive feature of Becky.

James Brady, the former press secretary to Ronald Reagan who was paralysed in a 1981 assassi-



nation attempt, said he planned to use the doll as a "teaching guide."

"Barbie is still the same Barbie. She's still cool," he said.

The doll is being sold exclusively in Toys R Us stores across the US, and hit the shelves at \$19.99.

Between 4,500 and 6,000 dolls have been sold nationwide, Mattel officials said.

"Barbie's world reflects the real world. Barbie has African-American friends. She has Asian friends. She has Hispanic friends. She has men and women friends."

"This is another doll in her world that will really showcase the richness and the diversity that we see in the real world today," said Mattel's product manager, Maria Libraty,

AP, Washington

Solzhenitsyn has heart trouble

Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who fought the Soviet Union before turning his fire on capitalist Russia, has been admitted to hospital with a heart condition, his assistant announced yesterday.

"He feels all right and did not have a heart attack," said Munira Urazova.

The 79-year-old Nobel laureate was admitted to the Central Clinical Hospital on 12 May.

Solzhenitsyn won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1970 for writings which publicised the harshness of the Soviet prison camp system, in which he spent nearly a decade.

Expelled from the Soviet Union in 1974, Solzhenitsyn lived in exile in rural America for 20 years before returning to Russia, where he attacked his new leaders for being just as bad as the communists.

The author of *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, *First Circle* and *Cancer Ward* has led a discreet life since his weekly television programme was taken off the air in 1995.

The bearded firebrand, who says his country has lost its spiritual roots and favours a kind of 19th century rural nationalism, was widely criticised for being out of touch with modern Russia after his long exile.

Reuters, Moscow

briefing

HEALTH

Asthma gene mutation discovered on island

Researchers have identified a mutated gene that makes people susceptible to asthma, having discovered it on one of the world's most isolated islands.

Sequana Therapeutics analysed DNA from about 300 people on Tristan da Cunha, an island in the south Atlantic, about 1,500 miles from South Africa. About 30 per cent of the island's residents have asthma, apparently passed on from an original settler.

"The pinpointing of the mutated genes eventually could help identify people at risk of getting sick, and also could suggest new drugs for treatment."

"We found a difference - a change in that DNA that is different in people who have asthma than those that don't have the disease," said Bob Giargiari, of San Diego-based Sequana.

The researchers said that, of the estimated 15 million Americans with asthma, up to 10 per cent seemed to have a genetic predisposition to the disease.

SOCIETY

Lunch - not to be taken lightly

Sandwiches have become the latest status symbol for ambitious office workers, according to market research carried out by the supermarket chain Tesco. Bosses are making sure they order more expensive sandwiches than their secretaries, who will in turn order more expensive sandwiches than the lowly receptionist.

According to Tesco, it's all to do with image. "Sandwiches are usually eaten at your desk, and everyone looks to see what the next person has bought," said a spokesman.

Well-paid executives invariably insist on designer sandwiches, made from speciality breads, rather than a humble sliced loaf.

It appears that businessmen simply don't want to be seen with a humble cheese sandwich.

"They want to be seen as sophisticated knowledgeable about food - and a sandwich which stands out in a crowd is used to give them psychological edge over their rivals," said the spokesman.



SCHOOLS

ME taking toll in the classroom

The chronic fatigue illness ME is the biggest cause of long-term sickness absence in UK schools, a study published today claims. A survey responded to by 1,100 schools revealed ME was responsible for 51 per cent of long-term absence, while a fifth of schools had experienced cases of ME.

For every 100,000 children, there are 70 cases of ME, and more than a third of all cases occur in clusters - often in areas near polluted open water, the research says.

Jane Colby, an ME sufferer who carried out the survey with consultant microbiologist Dr Elizabeth Dowsett, said: "This disease shows a very sinister pattern right across the school population. No-one can deny any longer how serious it is."

ME, which can leave sufferers so weak they can barely chew food, is more commonly associated with high-flying adults, earning it the nickname "yuppie flu". However, awareness is growing of its capacity to strike in children, causing them to miss vital months of schooling.

Jane Colby writes on ME in *Education Plus*, in today's edition of *The Independent*.

Lucy Ward

TECHNOLOGY

T-rays could supersede X-rays

The T-Ray could replace the X-Ray, with images that are sharper and safer, according to research published today.

Scientists in New York say the terahertz rays - electromagnetic waves with frequencies that are measured in trillions of seconds - could be used in everything from medicine to drug enforcement.

Physicist Xi Cheng Zhang and his colleagues at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York, say the imaging system can produce pictures with a resolution of up to 150 micrometres.

The team, whose findings were reported in *New Scientist*, is initially concentrating on its medical applications. The T-Rays could also be used to check silicon chip circuits, hunt for hidden drugs being loaded onto planes, look for defects in plastics and monitor food for freshness.

ALCOHOL

Record number fail breath-tests

More than 100,000 people breathalysed by police last year were over the drink-drive limit, the Home Office said yesterday. Police forces around the country carried out 781,000 roadside tests in 1996, the largest number ever. Of those, 100,500 were positive. In 1995, 94,400 out of 702,700 tests conducted were positive.

The Association of Chief Police Officers said the increase in the number of tests may have been a direct result of a policy decision last year to test all drivers involved in accidents.

Kathy Marks

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Inquiry into jet-set college chief 'flawed'

An investigation into the expenses claimed by a jet-setting university vice-chancellor saw "errors of judgement", the Government's public spending watchdog said yesterday.

The National Audit Office found that Portsmouth University had not complied with good practice in its handling of allegations against Neil Merritt, who resigned as vice-chancellor in December, 1994.

"The university had incurred 'significant costs' during its investigation, including around £140,000 for an independent inquiry, the NAO said.

Portsmouth University governors launched an initial investigation in the autumn of 1993, after it emerged that Mr Merritt had claimed on expenses for club class air travel on two trips to Egypt and the Far East when he had in fact downgraded to two economy class tickets for himself and his wife, making a profit of £1,457.

A year later, the vice-chancellor's secretary reported concerns that her boss was misrepresenting his expenses to evade VAT, and Mr Merritt handed in his resignation shortly afterwards.

The National Audit Office said there was no evidence that anyone involved in handling the investigation had acted improperly, but said that the university's audit committee had misjudged the seriousness of the vice-chancellor's actions because it did not involve the theft or the loss of university funds.

It recommended that other universities learn lessons from Portsmouth's experience in setting procedures on handling misconduct for senior staff.

In addition, it called for the Department for Education and Employment to offer more guidance on the duties and responsibilities of governing bodies.

Lucy Ward

Big ideas
in a small space



Big ideas
in a small space



مكتبة من الامم المتحدة

The Shirley Valentine devastated by Aids takes revenge on her fisherman lover



Good times, hard times: Jan Pink and Pavlos Georgiou (left) during their relationship, and (right) Miss Pink as she is now, her appearance dramatically changed by the onset of Aids, which caused her weight to plummet to five stones

Photographs: Solo



Ian Burrell

Only eight months ago, Janette Pink weighed barely five stone and could talk only in a whisper. Her skin had turned brown from the effects of Aids and doctors gave her 20 months to live.

But today, summoning her strength she will have her day in a Cypriot court, giving evidence against the man she believes deliberately infected her with the deadly virus. It is this fight for justice which has strengthened her will to survive. Once too weak to stand, she has put on two stone and taken up swimming to build her strength.

At the weekend she travelled more than 2,000 miles from her home in Basildon, Essex, back into the searing summer heat of the Mediterranean holiday island where she had set out on the dream of a new life only four years ago.

Mirroring the script of the film *Shirley Valentine* she uprooted from

Britain after divorcing from a long marriage and then quickly fell in love.

Tomorrow, for the first time in nine months, she will set eyes on her former lover, Pavlos Georgiou, the man on trial for giving her Aids.

Mrs Pink, 45, is the chief prosecution witness. "I want to go back to Cyprus to see his face in the dock," she said. "I wonder whether he will be able to look me in the eye."

She will allege that Mr Georgiou, 39, a fisherman, gave her HIV through unprotected sex during an 18-month relationship which began with a chance meeting in a local bar, two months after she left England.

Last night Mrs Pink was with friends and relatives in Agia Napa, the resort on the south-eastern tip of the island where she first met Mr Georgiou. Her former lover looked tired and angry last night at the prospect of appearing in court. Lying in front of the television in the new apartment he has had built alongside the family-run London

Archway pub in Agia Napa where the couple met, he declined to talk about the case. "I don't care about her," he shouted in Greek. "Get out of my house before I punch you."

This morning the former lovers will separately make the 25-mile journey down the coast in the humidity of 27°C temperature to the modern white court building in Larnaca, which is preparing for the case, the

If Mr Georgiou is convicted he is likely to come against prejudice and isolation in prison because of his HIV status. "This is not like England. Here we don't like people who have Aids," said another local.

The case has only been brought at all because of a tireless campaign by Mrs Pink and her family. The prosecution is based on an ancient island law aimed at limiting the

"I want to go back to Cyprus to see his face in the dock ... I wonder if he will be able to look me in the eye"

like of which has not been heard in Cyprus before.

Local feeling is running high. "People are very angry with the Cypriot guy," said one local man. "He's a killer just the same as if he was using a gun. He has destroyed that woman and he should be hung."

spread of diseases like cholera and typhoid and carries a maximum sentence of only two years in jail and a £1,500 fine. But Mrs Pink and her supporters believe the outcome of the case could have vital implications for the future, setting an international precedent which could be used

against those who fail to warn their sexual partners that they have HIV.

In 1992, Kenneth Clarke, then Home Secretary, ruled out a criminal offence of knowingly transmitting HIV, and the only recourse in Britain is a manslaughter or murder charge, along with proof that the death of the victim was intended.

Mrs Pink, the former wife of a City accountant had travelled to

months, she saw Mr Georgiou occasionally, as a friend, until in April 1994 she realised she had fallen in love. He had, she says, confided to her that his wife was dying from leukaemia. In fact, Martha Georgiou was dying from Aids and the youngest of the couple's four children also had the virus. But unaware of her lover's HIV status, Mrs Pink agreed to unprotected sex.

Mrs Pink was said by friends to be "mesmerised" by her new lover who took her on trips to the snow-covered Cyprus mountains. Later she was happy to part with thousands of pounds from her divorce settlement to help him build a new boat.

But at Christmas, the truth began to unfold. Martha Georgiou died from Aids in a London hospital. As word spread in Cyprus, Mrs Pink's friends persuaded her to go for an Aids test. Even when she discovered she was HIV-positive, she could not overcome her infatuation. Believing that Mr Georgiou was the only per-

son who could now care for her, she moved into his home, and then in January last year became accidentally pregnant. Scared that the baby would be HIV-positive, she opted for a termination.

Within months, Mrs Pink had developed full-blown Aids and her health rapidly deteriorated. The physical side of her relationship with Mr Georgiou came to an end. She last saw him at the harbour as she returned to Britain last August, desperately ill and close to death.

Even now she needs 30 drugs a day, morphine and frequent blood transfusions. Her partial recovery has been spurred, she says, by the realisation that her former lover could still be passing the virus to others.

According to Mr Georgiou, Mrs Pink was aware all along of his HIV status and is now pursuing a vendetta. He said Mrs Pink had made a "big mistake" in seeking the prosecution. "Her motive is revenge. She was just jealous," he said.

T-Rex's bite made worse by his gout

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

It was grumpy, loud, and carnivorous: and the classic image of Tyrannosaurus Rex, the archetypal dinosaur, may have had a lot to do with its appetite, according to work by American scientists. For the "tyrant king" of the now-extinct beasts had gout, says a study of fossilised bones and joints. This would have made movement painful - just as it does for human sufferers of the condition.

And for anyone who decides that seeing its fabled grumpiness on screen (in the new Spielberg film *The Lost World*) is not enough, the next few months will offer the chance to buy two of the most complete T rex skeletons that exist. One, with more than 60 per cent of the bones in place, is being offered for \$10m, while another - which was key in the discovery of T rex's ailment - is being auctioned in autumn in New York, with a reserve price of \$1m.

Gout is caused by the formation of needle-shaped crystals of uric acid in the joints - usually, in humans, because of



ineffective kidneys. Among famous sufferers was Henry VIII. Before modern medicines (which can dissolve the crystals) were available, the usual treatment was rest, in order that the crystals might dissolve sponta-

neously. However, it causes erosion of the bone where the crystals form - which is what Bruce Rothschild, of the Arthritis Center of Northeast Ohio, in Youngstown, noticed in the right forearm of one of the three

most complete T rex skeletons (known as Sue). More studies on other bones of other skeletons confirmed signs of bone erosion peculiar to gout - which has been found in modern-day reptiles and birds, which are de-

Mr Grumpy of the dinosaur world: T rex, whose unamiable disposition has been attributed to an unrelieved diet of meat, which led to gout

scended from the dinosaurs. The question, though, is why T rex should have got gout, since it did not (as far as palaeontologists can tell) drink port or eat butter, the usual causes in these genetically predisposed to the disease. However, says Mr Rothschild, another factor is consumption of foods with high concentrations of chemicals known as purines - plentiful in red meat.

This, he notes, was "no stranger to this denizen from the Cretaceous era." The sale of T rex skeletons has been timed to cash in on the the Spielberg film, and could provide a useful measure of the real scientific value of dinosaur skeletons - as opposed to their value to filmmakers.

The \$10m price tag placed on the first skeleton, which includes a tooth 33cm long, is almost 10 times greater than the previous top price for a fossil.

Poms deprived of the right to whinge

Matthew Brace

Poms, stop your whingeing. The age-old insult meted out to Britons by Australians (or Skippies, as we like to say when hurling back slang in return) is no longer derogatory, but a term of endearment.

Yesterday, the President of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Sir Ronald Wilson, ruled that "pom" and "pommie" were unlikely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate.

Sir Ronald was dismissing a complaint - presumably from a whingeing pom - against the *Courier-Mail* newspaper in Brisbane.

However, he said he could imagine, "albeit with some difficulty", that the words could be unlawful in the context of an article which was plainly malicious or scurrilous.

The term "pom" has a variety of origins, depending on who you talk to. Some say it came from the red, pomegranate hue



says, above a description of the same word as "dried and powdered cooked potato".

Australians may have lost a popular insult yesterday but those who really want to vent their anger on intruders from the UK can of course revert to another age-old favourite - "whingeing bath-dodgers".

When Britons arrive Down Under they are unused to the heat and continue, so the fable goes, to bathe only infrequently compared to their antipodean cousins.

One Skippy in Britain, Jonno Coleman, award-winning DJ at Virgin radio, and Sydney-sider, said "pom" was now considered a "badge of honour" rather than an insult.

"Poms are proud of it. It's better than 'wogs' - the name the Greeks or Italians get given by the Australians," he said.

"Mind you, the Greeks are so used to it now that when a group of them set up a theatre company they called it Wogs out of Work."

Naturally Greenpeace approves of chopping down trees to make window frames.

Window frames made of timber from well managed forests are more ecologically acceptable than those made of uPVC. So says Greenpeace. Who are we to disagree?

Think Wood

The Timber Trade Federation, 26-27 Oxenden Street, London SW1V 4EL

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news

'Crash' driven out of the West End for good

David Lister
Arts News Editor

The Government was yesterday urged to step in and redefine what an 18 film certificate means, as Westminster councillors banned the controversial film *Crash* from being shown in London's West End.

The film will still open on 6 June at 40 cinemas nationwide including those parts of London outside the City of Westminster.

But in a surprisingly vitriolic judgement yesterday, Westminster's licensing sub-committee's chairman labelled the film as "bordering on obscenity" liable to lead to voyeur action and guilty of depicting women in a "sexually humiliating way".

Even the three councillors who voted against the ban by the nine-strong Conservative controlled committee gave the film's producers little comfort.

Labour councillor Kate Wilkins said afterwards "It's stupid to give all this publicity to the most boring, tedious film I've ever seen. And as usual in an art film, it has women taking their clothes off."

Crash directed by David Cronenberg and starring Holly Hunter and Rosanna Arquette,

focuses on a group of people who gain sexual stimulation from car crashes. The film, based on the novel by J.G. Ballard, is however made in a stylised manner depicting its central characters as unfulfilled, and the sex as cold and unerotic.

Yesterday's decision by Westminster councillors to make its interim ban on the film permanent was especially important for its call on the Government to arrange for new independent guidelines for 18 films. At present, the guidelines used by the British Board of Film Classification (which has given *Crash* an 18 certificate) say that 18 certificate films cover those "requiring an adult understanding" including "nudity in a sexual context and graphic violence."

Westminster councillors complained yesterday that "the guidelines for 18 films are so wide that virtually any film could be classified under the heading."

Yesterday's committee meeting provided a dramatic clash of cultures. A 69-year-old antiques dealer, John Bull, who chaired the sub-committee, delivered a fierce denunciation of the film following an impassioned plea by 39-year-old Chris Auty, the film's executive producer. After

his plea the committee went into private session to debate the merits of the film for more than two hours. Mr Bull read a statement on behalf of the committee saying that the film was "bordering on obscenity".

He went on "The main characters in the film are shown as being sexually attractive, independently minded, interpersonally powerful, effective and tenacious. In short they are depicted to be attractive role models. It is for this reason the sub-committee found the deviant behaviour of the main characters in relation to sex and car crashes most disturbing... it is argued that the film taken as a whole could deprave and corrupt."

In his plea to the committee, Chris Auty said: "It seems to me that any commonsensical person seeing the film will acknowledge that it paints a disturbing world, one which has become cold, technological, dehumanised. *Crash* clearly warns us against dehumanisation, against a society drifting into affectlessness."

"Simply because it does not open with a statement of moral guidance does not mean that the film is not pre-occupied with moral issues."



Last rites: mourners at the funeral in Edmonton, north London, yesterday of 'Sunglasses' Ron Staples, 'King of the Teddy Boys' Photograph: Brian Harris

Sahara's lost rivers reveal man at work

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

The Sahara may be a by-word in deserts nowadays, but half a million years ago prehistoric humans lived and made tools there amongst plentiful rivers.

Radar observations carried out by the Space Shuttle in 1981 pointed towards the existence below the Saharan surface of dried-up ancient riverbeds which, when they flowed, would have made ideal sites for early humans to build villages.

New, unpublished research by Professor Vance Haynes at the University of Arizona, suggests that the rivers were flowing about 400,000 years ago, and that those early humans made tools such as hand axes and even meat cleavers. The findings, from digging by a team of archaeologists from the university, indicates that what is now wasteland was once a fertile area. During previous ice ages - the last of which was only

10,000 years ago - it may have been a temperate, fertile region, compared with chillier areas further north.

Today it is one of the most inhospitable places on the planet, devoid of vegetation, less than a millimetre of rain annually, and with baking temperatures.

Present theories suggest that humans originated in the Great Rift Valley area of central Africa, where fossils of hominids from up to 3 million years ago have been found. But palaeontologists have wondered about how widely early humans were spread across the continent, and how they would have migrated to other countries. If they were well-established in northern Africa, using the fertile Sahara as a base, then they might have arrived in Europe and Asia far earlier than if they were mainly based in mid-Africa and migrated north.

Early results of the work were announced last January. Previously, imaging radar de-

ployed from the Space Shuttle has been used to uncover buried parts of the Great Wall of China, providing precise indicators to archaeologists of where to begin digging. The same radar has also been used to indicate the areas of northern Africa where the present-day continents collided 650 million years ago.

"These data reveal geologic structures buried beneath the thin skin of desert sands, like an X-ray's ability to study the inside of a human body," said Robert Stern, of the University of Texas at Dallas, who helped set up the radar system. "If you're standing on the surface there is little to be seen. The geologic structures we are seeing are obscured by a few inches to a few feet of sand."

According to fossils found in 1995 in Kenya, the first hominids may have evolved about 4.2 million years ago, much earlier than "Lucy", who first walked upright 3.2 million years ago in Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania.

Moviegoers to get tonic with a whiff of gin

Kim Sengupta

Next time you go to the cinema, be prepared to have all your senses assailed. It is no longer just sound and vision, but smell which could also come into play.

An advertising company is launching the first smellyvision campaign for film goers to promote Gordon's Gin. As a gin and tonic is mixed on screen, the smell of juniper berries will waft across the audience.

The aromatic effect will be created by releasing the scent of the berries through the auditorium's air conditioning system.

However, those hoping to inhale a tippie will be disappointed. It is completely non-alcoholic and will dissolve in carbon dioxide.

The week-long trial will begin at the Ritzy cinema in Brixton, south London, on Friday. If public reaction is favourable it will be launched nationwide.

Andy Neal, of United Distillers, said the company hoped that the £250,000 campaign would boost the revival of gin, which in common with many other spirits is trying to shake off its image as the older-persons' drink.

According to the British Film Institute, this is the first time an

odour has been linked to an advert, although combining movies with smells date back more than 50 years.

In 1940 audiences at *My Darling Clementine* were treated to a range of flowers and forests to petrol and tar. The effect was repeated in the 1959 documentary *Behind the Great Wall*, *Scent of Mystery* the same year, and *Pohstner* in 1982.

A spokesman for the Advertising Standards Authority said: "This is a new area in which cinema goers will have no choice in whether or not they want to be subjected to the smell in the advertisement. We shall have to see how the public react."

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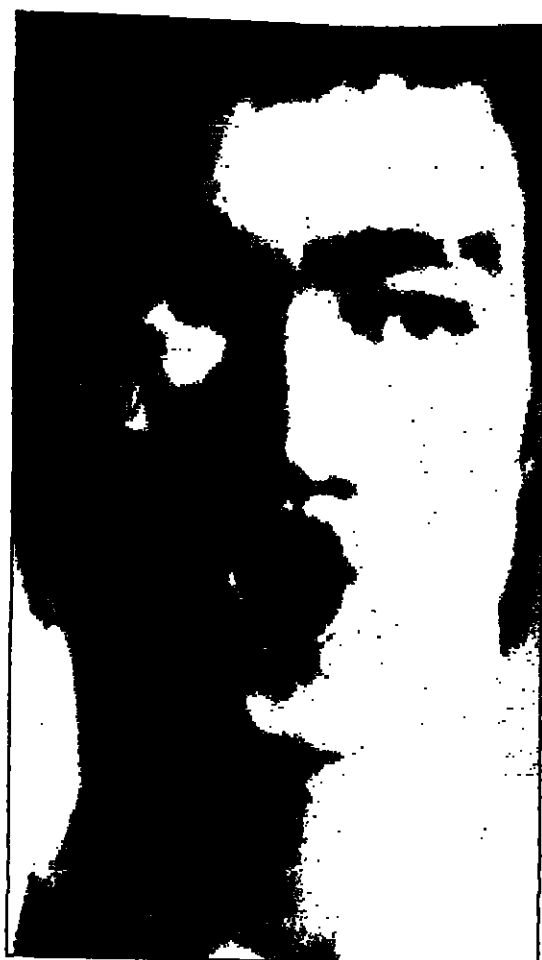
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Blair's favourite persuader bags another victory – for crisps

Bruce Lee, who features in the Doritos credits...

Paul McCann
Media Correspondent

Tony Blair's favourite adman, Chris Powell, had more good news last night, when his advertising agency, BMP DDB, picked up the advertising industry's highest award for a piece of work that wasn't even an advertisement.

BMP DDB, which handles the Labour Party's account, picked up the only gold of the night at the advertising world's

Oscars - the Design and Art Direction awards - for its sponsorship credits for Doritos crisps.

The credits, which were used during Doritos's sponsorship of a season of ITV film premieres, had the faces of film stars such as Terry Thomas and Bruce Lee superimposed on a pair of lips munching crisps and making appreciative noises. "This is the first award to go to a sponsorship credit," said Chas Bayfield, a creative at Tango agency

HHCL & Partners and one of the judges. "It won because it was original and mould-breaking. Up until a few years ago sponsor credits were just graphics. It also won because it made all the judges in the room laugh."

The same creative team from BMP DDB also won a silver award in the cinema category for its hard-hitting work for the Ministry of Sound nightclub's "Use Your Voice" ads. The cinema ads showed racists, homophobes and yuppies and encouraged young people to vote in the election because the people featured would.

The Doritos "munching mouths", which last only a few seconds, beat off the advertisement from Blackcurrant Tango, the heavily tipped industry favourite. The advertisement featured xenophobic spokesman Roy Gardner marching along the White Cliffs of Dover challenging a French schoolboy to a fight because he

didn't like blackcurrants. It won a silver in the longer advertisements category for the agency HHCL & Partners.

Also winning a silver was the third most complained about advertisement on British television last year. Nike's Euro '96 football match between evil demons and a side led by former Manchester United star Eric Cantona attracted complaints from around 120 viewers last year because of its demonic imagery and because

of worries it might scare children. The Good versus Evil ad, as it is known, was created by Nike's Amsterdam-based agency Wieden & Kennedy and won its silver in the ads under 60 seconds category.

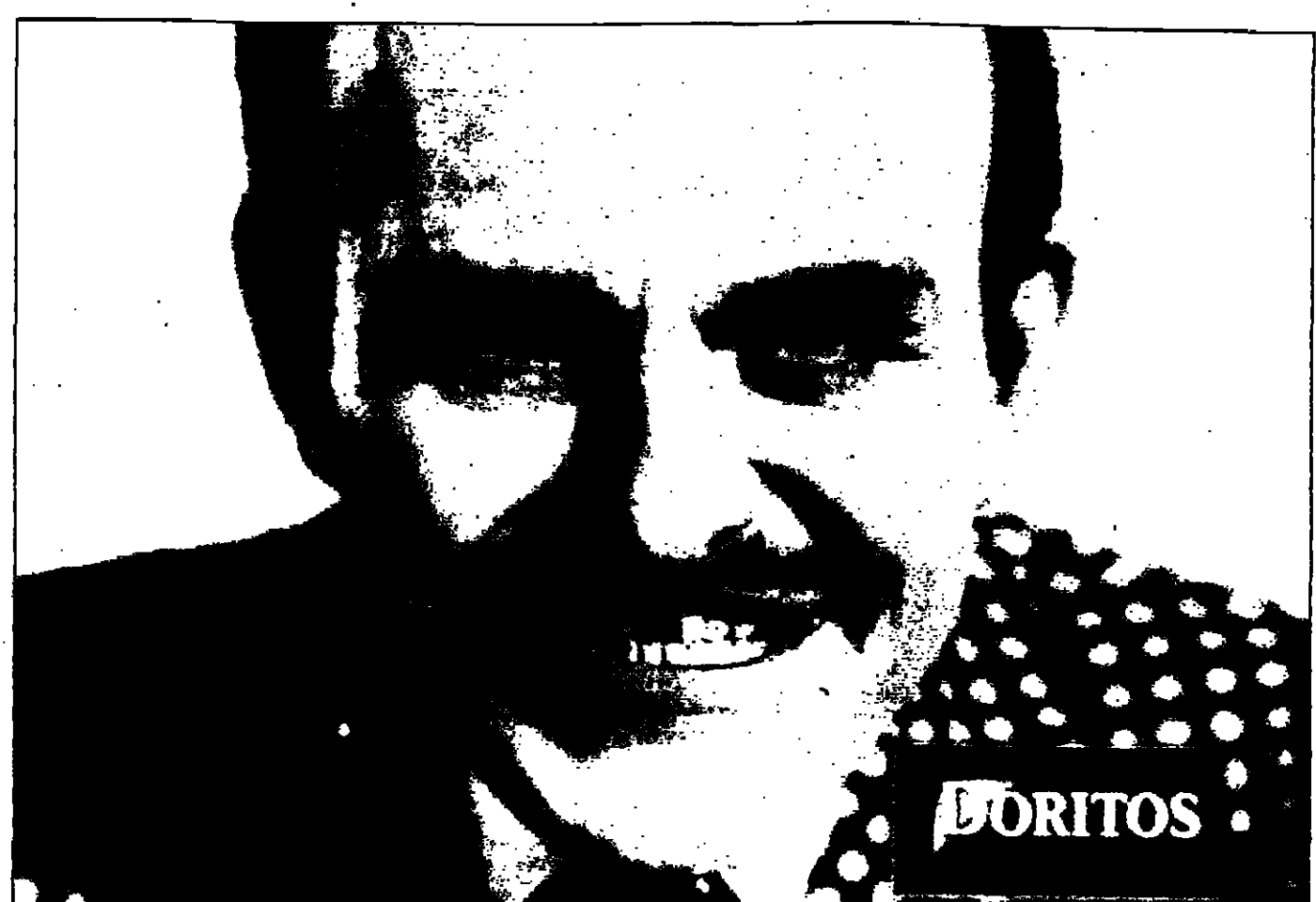
In the press advertising category Saatchi & Saatchi's controversial Club 18-30 advertising picked up a silver. Saatchi & Saatchi's "Beaver Espanso" posters for Club 18-30 won a silver award last year but the advertising agency was

forced to hand it back when the Advertising Standard's Authority was deluged with complaints about the suggestive nature of the posters.

This time the ads ran in youth magazines like Loaded and kept their heavy reliance on double entendre to suggest sex-filled holidays for twenty-somethings. Copylines included: "One swallow doesn't make a summer", "Something deep inside her said she'd come again" and "Spend two weeks on some

bloke's boat". Mr Bayfield said it was easier for ads that sell youth products to win awards: "It is always the funny, beer ads or sexy ads that connect with the judges. It is also easier to make interesting ads that are just for one group. With soap powder you have to be careful not to turn anyone away, so its advertising is traditionally bland."

"I would love to see something as potent as the Ministry of Sound vote ads used to sell soap powder."



along with the comedy actor Terry Thomas. The advertising agency, BMP DDB, which created it also handles the Labour account

Princess in armour put focus on mines

Christopher Bellamy
Defence Correspondent

There are an estimated 100 million anti-personnel landmines scattered around the world in 71 countries and they kill or maim - usually maim - an estimated 20,000 people a year, mostly civilians in the poorest areas of the world.

As the Red Cross, which has been in the forefront of the campaign against such mines said recently, they are "fighters that never miss, strike blindly, do not carry weapons openly, and go on killing long after hostilities are ended. In short: mines are the greatest violators of international humanitarian law. They are the most ruthless of terrorists".

The Princess of Wales's visit to Angola in January, in support of the Red Cross campaign, raised its profile dramatically. Pictures of the Princess wearing body armour and a helmet with a visor, learning how to dispose of mines, and of the ghastly injuries inflicted on civilians, particularly children, contributed to growing pressure for a world-wide ban.

Angola is probably the most mined country in the world, with an astonishing one-and-a-half mines per inhabitant, or 10 to 15 million mines in all. More than 30,000 Angolans have had limbs amputated as a result of mine explosions.

Martin Bell, the new independent MP for Luton, said in his inaugural speech on Tuesday, "they are laid by soldiers against soldiers, but their principal victims are nearly always civilians and two categories of civilians - farmers and children".

Anti-personnel mines are small devices which explode into fragments when detonated by their victim. They can be placed on stakes, scattered over the ground or buried slightly below it, and can be detonated by trip-wires, by pressure or just by



The Princess of Wales during her visit Angola

being touched. The brightly coloured "butterfly" mine, the most common found in Afghanistan, is particularly attractive to young children, who think it is a toy. Many have lost a hand, an arm, eyes or a face to those "toys".

The Government's announcement of a total ban on the import, export, manufacture and transfer of anti-personnel landmines and components for them marks a victory for a co-ordinated campaign run by the UK Working Group on Land Mines. Many organisations have been involved, including the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Oxfam, Save the Children, Action Aid, Christian Aid and, most active, the Red Cross.

One of the key problems in trying to ban anti-personnel landmines is defining what exactly they are. Anti-tank mines, which only go off when a heavy weight is driven over them, are

seen as legitimate weapons of war. But one of the British Army's mines, the L27, an anti-tank mine placed to one side of a road, could be set off by a person - and has therefore been re-classified as an anti-personnel mine. By a bizarre quirk of fate, the most dramatic effect of the Government's moratorium on the use of anti-personnel weapons will be that the Royal Air Force cannot use its JP-233 airfield denial weapon - because as well as bombs to blow holes in runways it contains small anti-personnel mines - HB 876 - to impede the runways' repair. The Government has now classified HB 876 as an anti-personnel weapon, and so its use is banned. JP-233, which has to be delivered from very low level - was the main reason why the RAF made a speciality out of low-level attack, and why it sustained such heavy losses in the 1991 Gulf War.

In practice, the Government's announcement yesterday was aimed at other countries.

British forces have used mines in two recent wars: the Falklands in 1982 and the Gulf in 1991, and obeyed the rules of war which demand that minefields be clearly marked and recorded, and cleared the fields up afterwards. The most significant message will be to give a lead to the movement for an international ban. Fifty countries took part in the international conference in Ottawa in October last year. The Ottawa Group committed itself to the earliest possible date to ban the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of such mines.

The Foreign Office says Britain has not made or exported any mine since 1982, although the UK Working Group disputes that. Some British companies, including Ferranti and Marconi, have been accused of making mine fusing systems. Under the new rules announced yesterday, manufacture of components, as well as whole mines, is also banned.

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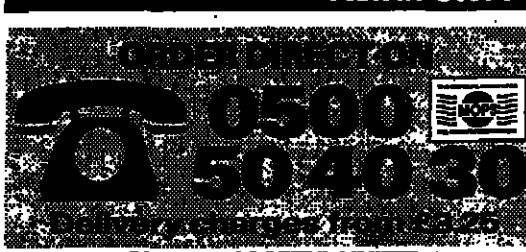
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Big ideas
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news

Specialist task force to target youth crime

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

A specialist task force to help tackle juvenile crime is being set up by the Government. It was announced yesterday.

The 12-strong team, which will include experts from social services, the police and the Audit Commission, will advise the Home Secretary on future policy and help draft new laws.

In his first major public speech since he became Home Secretary, Jack Straw also yesterday outlined plans for a major overhaul of the Crown Prosecution Service and repeated his pledge to deal with youth crime. This included forcing some young offenders to do community work and undergo extra education (such as Saturday morning schools), and random drug testing of some burglars and robbers.

Speaking at the Police Federation's annual conference in Blackpool, Mr Straw revealed

details of his new Youth Justice Task Force, which is expected to be set up within a few weeks. The unit will comprise invited representatives from organisations including the probation service, the Home Office, the Department of Health, social services, courts, police, and the Audit Commission, the public spending watchdog.

The task force will help Mr Straw draw up the details of the forthcoming Crime and Disorder Bill, and advise on future policy and initiatives in dealing with youth crime.

The decision to bring in expert help emphasises the importance Mr Straw is placing on reducing juvenile offending.

"The new task force will represent a significant change of approach," he said. "Too often, in recent years, we have seen change by dictat. I want change based on consent, openness and partnership. I want to shed some much needed light on the workings of the youth justice."

He added: "It will act as the engine of change to drive the much-needed reforms of the youth justice system - a system which is currently slow and ineffective and which wastes up to £1bn of taxpayers' money every year."

On the issue of the CPS, Mr Straw said that the Attorney-General would shortly announce that the organisation was being split into 42 areas - one for each police area with a joint operation for London. A chief Crown prosecutor would be appointed for each area and would take over responsibility from the police of keeping victims informed of the progress of cases.

Mr Straw said there would also be a review of the whole of the CPS to discover whether failings in the organisation were responsible for the fall in the number of prosecutions.

To a warm applause he outlined other measures to deal with young troublemakers.

These include "action plan orders" to force juvenile offenders to change their attitudes and behaviour. In the worst cases teenagers would be given a timetable of events they must follow, which could include carrying out community work or reparation for the victim and extra education, he said.

The Crime and Disorder Bill will also include a new drug treatment and testing order under which offenders whose crimes are connected to their addiction will have to undergo random tests. If the criminals, who could be burglars or robbers stealing to fund their habit, are found to be positive, they will be taken off their treatment programmes and returned to court for sentencing.

Also speaking at the conference Fred Broughton, chairman of the Police Federation, called for more money to pay for extra officers on the beat. He said the police service had been "stripped of excess fat".

Bell touches down for flying visit to runway warriors

Michael Streeter

The new MP Martin Bell yesterday called for a "model eviction" on his visit to the Manchester second-runway protest as officials continued their step-by-step attempt to shift demonstrators from the muddy, rain-drenched site.

Mr Bell, who has been criticised by some protesters for not taking a stand against plans to build the runway in Bollin Valley, which straddles the Greater Manchester-Chester border, said his priority was the safety of all involved, and refused to take sides.

After a tour of the site, where the eviction began at 4am on Tuesday, Mr Bell told former media colleagues he supported the right to demonstrate peacefully and the right of bailiffs to remove people from the 1,000-acre wooded land, part of which is in his Totton constituency. "I hope it will be a model eviction," he said.

He has reported to have raised with deputy under-sheriff Randall Hibbert allegations that a documentary-maker was hit on the head by bailiffs in Tuesday's operation, and claims by protesters that they had been kicked and some hit with batons.

Mr Bell said he would fight to ensure Manchester Airport did not become a "Heathrow of the North" and made it clear he disapproved of the airport in principle. "I do not see the volume of traffic merits the runway." But he said it was a "done deal" and he could not support breaking of the law. Although 40 people, including 11 yesterday, have left the protest voluntarily, plus 15 arrested on Tuesday, organisers claim there are now more demonstrators on the site than before as new protesters arrive, swelling their numbers to more than 100.

Tunnel engineers and tree-climbers among the protesters' officials yesterday removed people from the Jimi Hendrix camp, but the larger camps on the Cheshire side of the Bollin river, called Flywood, Live Rats, Wild Garlic and Sir Cliff Richard, are so far untouched, including the 70ft-long Cuckoo tunnel. The specialist teams, which may take a month to complete their work, are trying to isolate the camps from one another by removing walkways.



Ground control: Martin Bell on the site yesterday Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

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Labour orders inquiry into bribery claims

Fran Abrams and
Stephen Goodwin

Labour ordered a "high-level" internal inquiry yesterday into allegations that Mohammed Sarwar, the MP for Glasgow Govan, gave a bribe to another candidate in the general election campaign.

Mr Sarwar has admitted handing over £5,000 to Islam Badar, but argued that the money was a loan given after the election. He plans to take legal action against the *News of the World* over claims made in an article last Sunday.

The party's National Executive Committee met yesterday and said that a panel of three of its members would investigate and "leave no stone unturned."

Labour's general secretary, Tom Sawyer, announced the move after the meeting. "We will not hesitate to take action, however, tough, if there is any proof of corruption, abuse or wrongdoing. As Tony Blair said this morning, we were elected to introduce higher standards," he said.

Mr Sarwar said he "fully understood" the need for an inquiry and welcomed it. In a statement, the cash-and-carry millionaire echoed Mr Blair's commitment to higher standards in politics and insisted once again that the newspaper allegations were "totally false".

None the less, Mr Sarwar's prospects of hanging on as Britain's first muslim MP look bleak. His supporters in the fractious Govan Labour Party have begun to flake away, while the less committed hope he will resign by the weekend and let them prepare for the by-election they believe inevitable.

The coalition of Sarwar people, left activists and ordinary members in Govan is disintegrating by the hour, a party source said. "This is a tragedy not just for Sarwar, but for people who have given years of work for the Govan party. It has all turned to ashes in two weeks."

One member of the panel will be Alan Johnson, former general secretary of the Union of Communication Workers and now MP for Hull West and Hessle. The investigation will begin immediately and run parallel to the police investigation.

Mandelson to be minister without any questions

Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

Peter Mandelson, Minister without Portfolio, has also become the Minister without Questions. It emerged yesterday that he is to be the only Commons minister who will not be subjected to the regular sessions of grilling, question time cross-examination by MPs.

The curious office of Minister without Portfolio dates back to 1915, but for the last 50 years or so, office-holders in the Commons have always been available for questioning in the House.

The only exceptions appear to be Jeremy Hanley and Brian Mawhinney, but they were also chairmen of the Tory Party, and were therefore not paid ministers; the job was a device to give them access to Cabinet meetings and ministerial papers.

Mr Mandelson, who is based in the Cabinet Office, and has responsibility for the presentation and co-ordination of government policy, is paid a ministerial salary of £31,125 in addition to his MP's pay of £43,860. As Tory chairman, Mr Hanley and Dr Mawhinney

were also ministers without a department.

But last week, the official Commons record, *Hansard*, published a definitive list of the new government, which put Mr Mandelson as number two in the Office of Public Service (OPS), under David Clark, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and the Cabinet minister responsible for the Civil Service.

Mr Mandelson was given the same OPS post in the official *House of Commons Weekly Information Bulletin* this week.

As one of three Ministers in the OPS, Mr Mandelson would have been available for questioning by MPs in the Commons on 4 June, immediately before the new, weekly half-hour session of Prime Minister's Question Time.

But Whitehall sources said yesterday that there had been a mistake: *Hansard* and the *Bulletin* had got it wrong; Mr Mandelson was not part of Mr Clark's team in the OPS; and he is therefore not available for oral questions in the House. A spokeswoman said, however, that he would answer written Commons questions.

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news

Woman deaf since birth wins new deal for disabled

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

A woman who has been profoundly deaf since birth has won her campaign for the right to extra benefit which she argued she needed in order to have a social life.

Rebecca Halliday was entitled to higher-rate disability living allowance (DLA) to cover a sign-language interpreter who would help her lead a normal social life, five law lords said yesterday in a key ruling against the Department of Social Security which opens the way for a better deal for deaf, blind and other severely disabled people.

The test-case decision in favour of the 22-year-old could be of crucial importance to thousands of disabled people after the judges backed their right to have social lives and rejected the DSS's argument that social ac-

tivities were "non-essential" so did not qualify for the non means-tested benefit under the relevant rules.

Lord Slynn said that a severely disabled person "is not to be confined to doing only the things which totally deaf (or blind) people can do and provided with only such attention as keeps him alive in such a community". What was important was whether the attention was "reasonably required" to enable a person so far as possible to live a normal life.

Ms Halliday, who works at a school near her home in Newark, Nottinghamshire, will now receive the £33.10 a week higher rate DLA for care during the day, instead of the lower rate of £13.15. She said: "I am delighted. Now I can move forward and plan for the future."

David Thomas, legal officer for the Child Poverty Action Group, which backed the case, said: "This is a great



Victory speech: Rebecca Halliday at home in Fiskerton, Nottinghamshire, after the law lords ruled in her favour yesterday

Photograph: Dave Burner

It opens the way for severely disabled people to have their real needs for a normal life considered."

Tim Sargeant, a spokesman for the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, said: "It's all very well saying deaf people can talk to each other but they want to have full social lives and meet people outside the deaf community."

Laura Jacobs, manager of the RNIB's benefits rights team, said the ruling could make "all the difference" to the lives of visually impaired people because the social and leisure needs of claimants would be taken into account in benefit decisions rather than just absolute necessities. The DSS had argued that totally

blind or deaf people should never be entitled to DLA (or in the case of claimants over 65, attendance allowance), because no amount of help would enable them to see or hear. But the philosophy of government policy and the recent Disability Discrimination Act, which is reflected in yesterday's ruling, is that disabled

people should be helped to live as full lives as possible.

The DSS faces a substantial potential increase in benefit pay-outs after the Halliday ruling but emerged the victor in a parallel test appeal against a refusal of attendance allowance. The judges ruled "reluctantly" that the need for an

incontinent arthritic to pay for someone to take away laundry did not call for frequent attention in connection with "bodily functions" as required by the law. Despite losing the appeal, however, the claimant, 71-year-old Gladys Cockburn, now receives the higher rate of £33.10 because her general condition has deteriorated.

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Father loses fight to halt wife's abortion

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

A father has no legal right to prevent his wife from aborting their unborn child, a Scottish judge ruled yesterday in a landmark judgment.

The ruling from Lord Eassie provoked the condemnation of pro-life groups and Cardinal Thomas Winning, the leader of Scotland's 750,000 Roman Catholics, who recently mounted a campaign, including offers of financial support, to try to persuade women not have abortions.

But the decision confirms, as is the case in England and Wales, that a fetus has no legal rights. Nor do fathers or the courts have the power to override the opinions of doctors under the 1967 Abortion Act.

James Kelly, of Inverkeithing, Fife, went to the Court of Session in Edinburgh to stop his estranged wife Lynne, a 21-year-old singer, from having an abortion and to seek custody of the baby and the couple's daughter.

Mr Kelly launched an immediate appeal, but Lord Eassie said it was clear that the law intended doctors to make the decision. Quoting from an earlier case, he said: "The great social responsibility is plainly placed by the law on the shoulders of the medical profession."

The judge added that the Abortion Act only required two doctors to form an opinion in good faith on the grounds for an abortion. The court's only role would be to investigate a doctor's good faith where doubt was cast upon it. But such a question had not arisen in this case.

In a 1987, an Oxford student failed in a High Court bid to stop his girlfriend, a fellow student, having an abortion, on the ground that a fetus has no legal rights.

The Society for the Protection of Unborn Children said yesterday's ruling was a "travesty of justice".

John Smeaton, the organization's national director, said: "Above all, the right which the law should uphold is the unborn baby's right to life."

Cardinal Winning said: "It is a sad day indeed. There is surely an extraordinary anomaly in the law when a father can be pursued by the Child Support Agency for maintenance of a child but has no say in protecting the child's life in the womb."

Cardinal Winning added that the case showed the inadequacy of the law in failing to safeguard any rights of the unborn child. "We have arrived at abortion on demand," he said. "Once again, it highlights the need for a complete review of the Abortion Act."

DAILY POEM

Scape

By Conleth O'Connor

overhead, the moon dodged passing clouds,
disturbing illicit copulation.
(natural law is an illusion)
windows on office blocks shuddered
as their nakedness was penetrated,
brass plates twittered condescendingly
at their neon neighbours.

somewhere far off, a mad motorist
ferreted through country roads
escaping the clutching ditches.

back in the city, footpaths sneaked
through halldoors, ran silently
outback and collided in the distance
at things we foolishly call mountains.

Conleth O'Connor, who was born in Co Wexford, wrote about the Dublin suburbia where he lived, and died in 1993. He published four collections of poetry. *Nights Without Stars*, *Days Without Sun* is a selection from these, with some previously unpublished poems. It is published by Arc Publications (£5.95) and is available from Arc at Nanhollie Mill, Shaw Wood Road, Todmorden, Lancashire OL14 6DA.

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Desert world: Mars, the red planet, photographed by the Hubble telescope. Photograph: Nasa

Doubts surface over life on Mars

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Life on Mars? The question mark is getting bigger. A study by American scientists has cast fresh doubts on the announcement last August by the US space agency Nasa that it had found fossils of living cells in a meteorite from Mars.

A team at the University of Hawaii, led by Edward Scott, said their analysis indicated that carbonates in the rock – taken as key evidence of life – were formed as part of a high-impact shock, and not long-term processes conducive to life.

The research, published today in the science journal *Nature*, adds weight to those opposing the Nasa conclusion. While the original paper – published in *Science* magazine in the US – sparked enormous public excitement, the research papers that have since cast doubt on it have followed have received comparatively little attention.

Last August, a multi-disciplinary team led by Nasa announced that tiny holes in a 16-million-year-old piece of meteorite known as ALH 84001 might be the remains of ancient Martian bacteria.

Since then, the meteorite has been examined by teams of

researchers around the world. Those who say it could harbour fossils cite evidence that the carbonates inside the rock formed at moderate temperatures over long periods of time.

The idea is that mineral-rich water percolated through tiny cracks in the rock, creating an environment in which bacteria could grow.

But others say it looks like the carbonate molecules formed in a hot flash – like that caused by a meteorite impact – which would make it less likely that living bacteria were once there. Scott's group backed the "hot flash" camp.

"We find that carbonate, plagioclase and silica were melted and partly redistributed by the same shock event responsible for the intense local crushing of pyroxene in the meteorite," they write.

Nasa is planning missions to Mars to scoop up and analyse rock and soil to see if any similar traces can be found.

The weather forecast for Nasa's Pathfinder probe, due to arrive on Mars on 4 July, is: Changeable. Pink skies, no clouds, temperatures rising to minus 40C. Planetwide dust storms. Later, clear blue skies, colder, minus 87C, brilliant ice clouds, no dust.

Supermodel: The winning picture in the *British Birds* magazine bird photograph of the year award of a cattle egret stretching its wings in Oman

Photograph: Jens Eriksen

Female scientists get raw deal

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Female scientists get a raw deal from the "peer-review" system, used in almost every country to determine who gets funding and jobs, according to a surprising study from Sweden.

According to researchers at Goteborg University – who had to go to court to get access to the confidential data from which they drew their conclusions – a woman researcher has to be 2.5 times more productive than a man in order to impress

a panel of interviewers equally. Furthermore, nepotism is rife: if an applicant, whether male or female, is known by the interview panel to have worked with a colleague, then that makes them more likely to win funding.

The work, published today in *Nature*, is the first time that the deliberations of the interview panels who decide on professional advancement for scientists has been objectively studied.

It also casts a cloud over the repeated efforts of schools, universities and government to

encourage more women to go into science, since it shows that prejudice is deep-rooted.

The peer review system used in Sweden, like that in the Britain and the US, presently determines who gets funding for work.

"I found the results very surprising," said Philip Campbell, editor of *Nature*. "The only way I can see it changing, apart from raising awareness, is to conduct peer reviews where the gender is concealed."

One female scientist who has recently completed a PhD

at a British university – but wished to remain anonymous – confirmed the findings of the paper. "It's a lottery," she said. "If you're in a group putting forward a grant proposal, then it's crucial who you nominate to present it to the panel – the trouble is, nobody can think of a better system."

To produce the paper, the Swedish researchers – two women, one a microbiologist and an immunologist, at Goteborg University – had to go to court and apply under Sweden's Freedom of the Press Act for

access to the confidential interview scores.

According to the researchers, Christine Wennekers and Agnes Wold, "peer reviewers gave women applicants lower scores than male applicants who displayed lower levels of productivity. In fact, the most productive group of female applicants ... was the only group of women judged to be as competent as men, although only as competent as the least productive group of male applicants."

No obvious explanation exists for the evident bias, though

studies going as far back as 1968 have shown that both men and women rate work done by a man more highly than that of a woman if they know the sex of the worker – but not if the gender is obscured.

The researchers also point out a further reason for gloomy prospects for women scientists worldwide: their study only looked at the peer review system in one research council in Sweden – the country recently named by the United Nations as the best in the world for equal opportunities.

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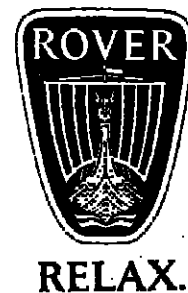
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chance of a
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In 1990s Britain a Pakistani with a degree has as much chance of a job as an uneducated white man

Jojo Moyes

Ethnic minority students, especially those of Asian origin, are outperforming their white counterparts — but still are struggling to translate this success into their employment prospects, says a major study by the Policy Studies Institute.

Ethnic Minorities in Britain, the fourth in a series of reports which have charted the experience of migrants and their families since the 1960s, found that among people of working age, Chinese, African Asians and Indians tend to be more qualified than whites, following a significant push for educational status among second-generation migrants.

But this does not necessarily guarantee them a better job. The study found that a completely unqualified white man has the same job prospects as a degree-educated Pakistani or Bangladeshi. Minorities are still seriously under-represented in top jobs, suggesting the existence of a "glass ceiling".

"Many black and Asian people are in worse jobs than white people despite having similar qualifications, and the education system is failing young black men and Pakistani men and women, who continue to be disproportionately without qualifications," it concluded.

The report shows that there are wide differences in the experiences of minorities, especially in the area of income. The report found that more than 80 per cent of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis live in households with incomes below half the national average, making them the poorest group in Britain.

By contrast African Asians and Chinese are more likely than whites to earn more than £500 per week and have low unemployment rates.

Tariq Modood, the main author of the report, said that diversity among minority groups was now just as important as the "black-white divide". "People who are not white in Britain are



Unequal opportunities: Despite high educational achievement, many blacks and Asians end up unemployed or in poorly-paid jobs Photograph: Tom Pilon

Joblessness — how the races compare

Rate of unemployment (%), by highest British qualification

Qualifications	White	Caribbean	Indian/ African Asian	Pakistani/ Bangladeshi
None	19 (13)	42 (19)	20 (13)	46 (54)
O-level or equivalent	11 (10)	31 (16)	20 (10)	36 (42)
A-level or higher	12 (7)	23 (16)	12 (12)	17 (18)

Figures in brackets denote women, while those with an asterisk denote small sample sizes

should not be an excuse for ignoring the racial disadvantage faced by other groups," said Richard Berthoud, one of the authors. "The diversity in experience means that policy will have to be more complex. You can't simply have another race relations Act."

One significant development was the conclusion that mixed relationships are clearly on the increase.

Of those born in Britain, half of Caribbean men, one-third of Caribbean women and 20 per cent of Indian and African men now have a white

partner, said the report, which cost £1m to produce.

Four out of every five "Caribbean" children have one white parent, while half of Caribbean families with children are headed by a single parent.

Racial harassment continued unabated, including insults

and abuse at the hands of strangers, neighbours, workmates and police. Twelve per cent of those interviewed said they had been racially abused or threatened in the past year, and a quarter said that they worried about the possibility of attack.

Black and Asian people were more likely now than 10 years ago to believe they had been unfairly treated by employers. The survey of 5,196 people of Caribbean and Asian origin, together with 2,867 white people to provide a comparison, was the largest ever survey of ethnic minorities in Britain.

Ethnic Minorities in Britain: diversity and disadvantage, Tariq Modood, Richard Berthoud, et al; BEPC Distribution — 01202 715 555; £17.50

RAF's order to go — 4,300 miles

Louise Jury

When RAF Flight Sergeant Dave Powell decided to send out for a curry for his NATO friends on exercise in frozen Canada, he wanted only the best.

And the best, he had decided on his honeymoon last month, was Tandoori Night in St Helier, Jersey.

Restaurateur Sultan Al-Mahmood left the Channel Islands two days ago with enough chicken tikka masala, madras and vindaloo for 75, to fly 4,300 miles to Canada.

Flt Sgt Powell was confident that the most elaborate curries would go a long way in the cause of international co-operation.

He and his air force colleagues sat down with NATO allies from New Zealand, Holland and the United States for the feast last night.

"I thought it would be a fantastic idea to have an Indian takeaway so they could get a taste of a real English delight," he said, with due deference to Britain's multi-cultural society.

Flt Sgt Powell is a member of No 8 Squadron, normally based at RAF Waddington, Lincoln. They flew out to Cold Lake Airbase near Edmonton 10 days ago for their fortnight stint with exercise Maple Flag.

A traditional part of proceedings is to offer a little hospitality at the end of exercises. But a locally produced buffet is the norm.

"This is very unusual," Flt Sgt Powell said. "But it's very important that we all co-operate together. It's camaraderie."

Mr Al-Mahmood arrived at the airbase yesterday. He took over a mess to prepare the dishes, many of which were frozen for transportation.

As for the bill, Flt Sgt Powell said the British taxpayer should not worry. "The RAF won't be partaking in any costs. The financial arrangements have been made privately between Mr Al-Mahmood and myself."

Flt Sgt Powell will be having the chicken vindaloo. "Most of the RAF like hot spicy food," Mr Al-Mahmood said.



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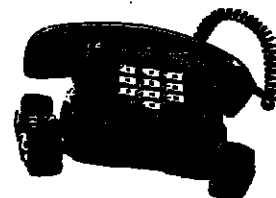
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international

Chirac refuses to let sleeping Euro dogs lie

John Lichfield
Paris

The French parliamentary elections are supposed to be all about Europe. But Europe is a dog which has stubbornly refused to bark during the campaign.

In the past couple of days, President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Alain Juppé have gone out of their way to try to wake the ungrateful beast. They have warned that a victory for the left, in the two rounds of voting over the next two Sundays, will leave France with a weak and muddled position in the European Union, especially on the single currency.

President Chirac, who is the-

oretically uninvolved in the campaign, made his comments, flanked by French and European flags, during a visit by Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany. France would only be able to defend its European interests if it "spoke with one voice," he said, not with a right-wing President (himself) and a left-of-centre parliamentary majority and government.

Mr Juppé followed up with a prediction that a victory by the French left would plunge the EU into an "economic and financial crisis". The Socialist leader, Lionel Jospin, has said that, as prime minister, he would try to soften some of the budgetary and economic conditions for the single currency, as now rigorously interpreted by the Germans, French and others.

Judging by the lack of interest in EU issues around the country, the belated warnings suggest a certain anxiety, even desperation, in the government camp. Although the last publishable polls forecast that the present centre-right coalition will win narrowly in the second round on 1 June, the advantage is fragile and based on uncertain arithmetic.

President Chirac's decision to call the election nine months early was intended to be a smash-and-grab raid which gave the government, led by his Gaullist party, a relatively easy victory. It may still turn out to have been an inspired gamble but, three days before the first round, the governing camp is clearly edgy.

Le Monde yesterday reported a private conversation in which the education minister, François Bayrou, leader of Force Démocrate, one of the centrist parties in the governing coalition,

said: "For the last three days, I've had a bad feeling about this campaign. I don't know why, but I have a bad feeling."

Five weeks ago President Chirac gave Europe, and the need to take difficult decisions on the single currency, as one of his principal reasons for calling an early poll. With public opinion in France broadly pro-Emu, the President hoped the coming European challenges would help to marshal a majority behind the existing, unpopular government.

In reality, neither Mr Juppé nor Mr Jospin, has been confident enough of his European ground to make European monetary union (Emu) a central part of his campaign. The voters, interested in the election at all, have focused on purely national issues, such as unemployment, and the government's state-dismantling reforms, without making the connections with European policy. Only the political extremes - the National Front on the right and the Communists on the left - have made Emu, and their virulent opposition to it, an important part of their platforms.

Even the belated interventions by President Chirac and Mr Juppé seemed unlikely to start a European debate as such. Mr Jospin chose to see their remarks as an attack on his ability, if he wins, to operate in "co-habitation" with President Chirac. He said France had managed to speak with "one voice" on EU affairs during previous "co-habitations" in 1986-88 and 1993-95 between a Socialist president and a centre-right government. It would do so again, with the political colours reversed, he said.

significant shorts

Karadzic 'may surrender to war-crimes tribunal'

Radovan Karadzic, Bosnia's most wanted war-crimes suspect, is considering surrendering to an international tribunal with documents compromising Serbia's president, a news report said. There was no confirmation of the report, published by Belgrade's independent *Nasa Borba* paper, which quoted sources it did not identify. But it said Mr Karadzic, Bosnian Serb political leader during more than three years of war, already had handed documentation to unidentified countries and possibly to the tribunal in The Hague. It said the documents included details on who gave orders to Bosnian Serb forces during the 1992-1995 war, and compromised the Serbian President, Slobodan Milosevic.

AP - Belgrade

Bomb trial gets emotional

Oklahoma City bombing prosecutors aimed for an emotional end to their case, with a survivor recalling how a routine meeting was shattered when "the whole building started to blow up." After a case that has seen 136 witnesses in 19 days, prosecutors sought to leave jurors with a big emotional punch, never letting them forget the 168 people who died in the 19 April, 1995 blast. Timothy McVeigh, a Gulf war veteran, could get the death penalty if convicted of murder and conspiracy in the blast, the deadliest act of terrorism on US soil.

AP - Denver

Sino-British body's last gasp

The Sino-British body overseeing Hong Kong's reversion to China will meet once more before the handover. The Joint Liaison Group, which worked out many of the details leading up to the colony's return to China at midnight of 30 June, will meet on Thursday and Friday of next week in Hong Kong, the government said.

Reuters - Hong Kong

Denmark's Schengen threat

Denmark's Justice Ministry says it may have to drop out of the European Union's visa-free travel zone, the Schengen agreement. The possibility stems from the introduction this week of a proposal for an EU agreement including closer police co-operation among the 15 member-nations and common immigration policy. Denmark will try to negotiate opt-outs from the new proposal. But the Justice Ministry says that if Denmark maintains those exceptions, the country could be forced to leave the 1985 Schengen treaty.

AP - Copenhagen

Billet-doux for all to read

Eight months after being thrown out of Monaco's royal palace for cheating on his wife, a talkative and repentant Daniel Ducruet has written a love letter to his beloved Princess Stephanie. The trouble is, the rest of the world can read it too. In "Letter to Stephanie," published in Paris this week by Editions No 1, Mr Ducruet, Stephanie's former bodyguard and the father of their two children, speaks of their clandestine affair, their marriage and its unhappy ending. Excerpts were published in *Paris-Match* magazine this week.

AP - Paris

Moscow kowtows to Chechens

Russian officials apologised to Chechen leaders a day after Russian jets intercepted and grounded a plane carrying a Chechen delegation to The Hague. The plane left the Chechen capital, Grozny, again yesterday and was allowed to fly to the Netherlands.

AP - Moscow

Prostitutes solicit the public

Prostitutes in Antwerp hold an open day on Saturday to break down barriers with the public and prove the red-light district is safe, the organisers said. "We want to show what's really going on here, that it's not a crime-ridden area," said a spokesman.

Reuters - Brussels



Spreading the message: Socialist Party election posters are mounted on a wall in the centre of Maubeuge on the Belgian border. Photograph: Brian Harris

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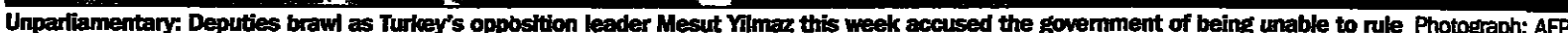
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Vural Savas: Fears civil war

If the court sympathises with

Perhaps more important are the political pressures to which the Constitutional Court – as guarantor of a judicial system rarely considered impartial – will be subjected. When the court announces its decision in a few months, it will do so with the authority of Turkey's establishment.



significant shorts

b trial gets emotional

The military has ruled Burma since 1962. Ms. Sun Kyi, daughter of the independence hero Aung San, was thrust into prominence by the 1988 uprising against military rule that was crushed when troops killed thousands of protesters.

British body's last

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Ms Goldberg was reported to have bought a Picasso print, *La Danse*, for \$4,600.

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international

Nazis, child abusers, or just good, clean-living workers?

Police move in on Chile's secretive and controversial 'Dignity Colony'

Phil Davidson
Colonia Dignidad, Chile

Some call him "the professor" for his knowledge and oratory. Others call him "the doctor" for his surgery in the local hospital and wartime experience as a medical orderly in Hitler's army. The German orphan he raised in Chile are encouraged to call him "our eternal uncle" to emphasise their lack of parents.

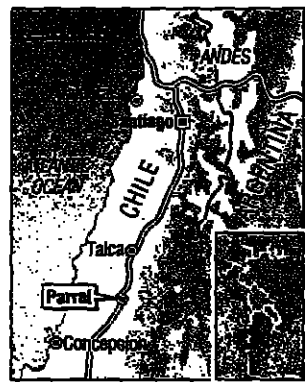
Whatever they call him, Paul Schaefer is now an old man on the run widely suspected of being a serial child abuser and active Nazi sympathiser. He is accused of heading a "state within a state" at the sinister "Colonia Dignidad" and what was once a horrific rent-a-torture chamber on this ranch in southern Chile.

Following years of outrage among Chileans, notably as the country began to flirt with democracy, police moved into Dignity Colony on Tuesday as snow fell on the pines and peaks east of the main gate. The carabinieri gave the impression they were searching for Mr Schaefer as well as for illegal arms reportedly stockpiled.

After several days of tension this week, many Chileans fear that the ranch lands, in the fertile foothills of the Andes, 230 miles south of Santiago, could become "Chile's Waco", a reference to the bloody attack by United States federal agents on the Davidian sect in Waco, Texas in 1993. Apart from child abuse and kidnapping - allegedly including the snatching of children from Germany - the ranch's 300 or so German residents have also been accused

of trafficking in arms. They deny all such charges as "lies, fantasies and communist propaganda", specifically blaming Chilean and German socialist politicians, and say they are just hard-working folk.

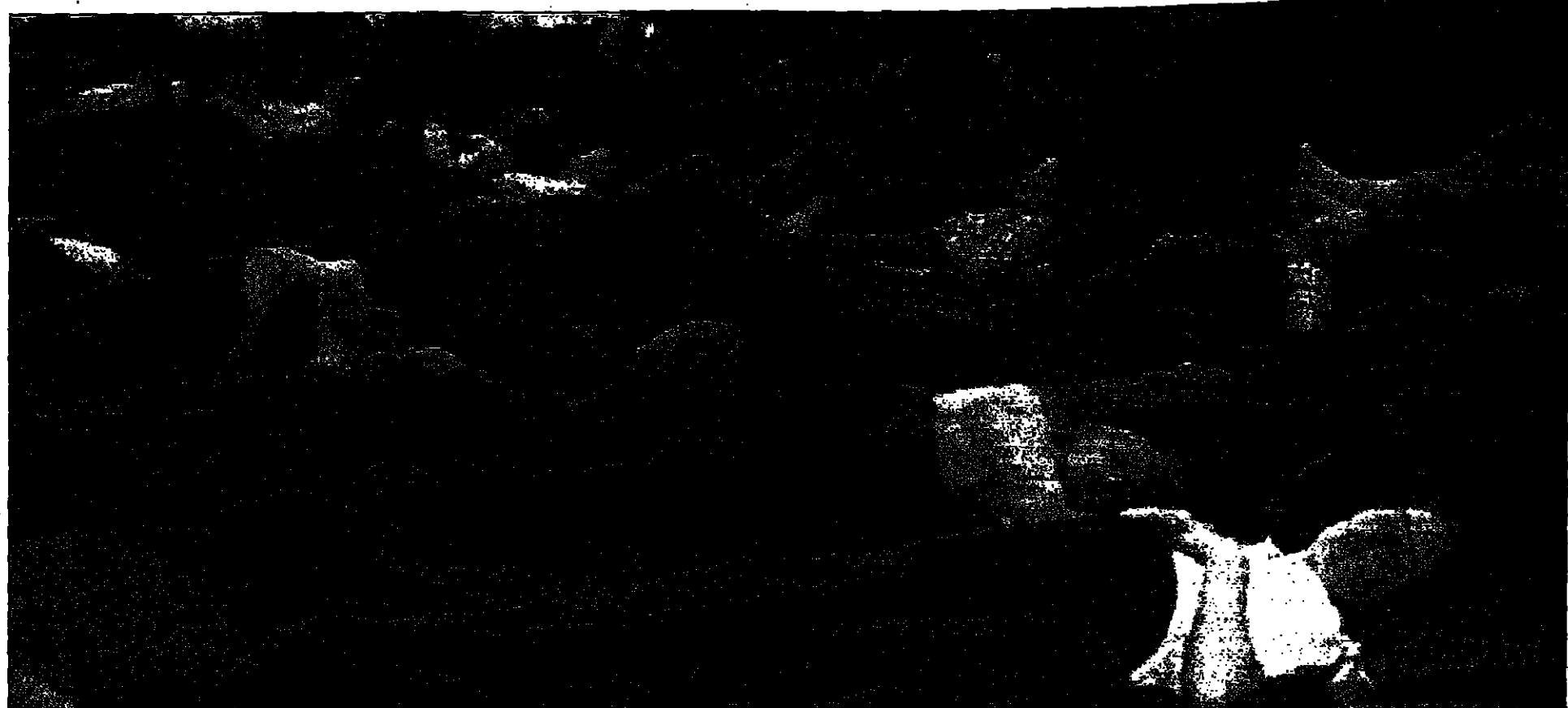
Perhaps embarrassed by its long-time name of Colonia Dignidad, the 35,000-acre ranch's 300 or so German residents now refer to it as Villa Baviera, in Spanish, or Bavariaville. Not only does the landscape resemble Bavaria, but the German



colonists do not hide their affinity with Bavaria's conservative Christian Social Union Party.

Human rights groups and those who fled the "colony" have spoken of a concentration-camp regime, with dogs trained to attack the genitals of intruders, and vigilante groups to keep outsiders away. Young defectors have accused Mr Schaefer and other group leaders of giving them mind-numbing drugs to prevent them from rebelling, leaving or telling their tales to outsiders.

Adding to the continuing



Laying down the law: Residents of Colonia Dignidad, in Chile, during their second week of hunger strike in 1994 as a protest over the group's loss of legal status Photograph: Reuters

allegations of child abuse, witnesses are increasingly coming forward to describe collaboration between the colony and General Augusto Pinochet's military regime of the Seventies and Eighties.

At that time, opponents of General Pinochet were taken to the remote area and dumped into underground torture chambers for electric shock treatment to Wagner or Mozart, according to accounts from eyewitnesses, including repentant Pinochet agents. German-speaking doctors reportedly administered drugs to torture victims.

The governments of Chile and Germany call Mr Schaefer their most-wanted man. They say he is wanted in both countries for multiple child abuse, child kidnapping and sodomy. His Colonia Dignidad, they say, is a den of iniquity whose mostly German residents are forced to work for no pay and whose children are forced into homosexual sex.

Mr Schaefer was a medical orderly in Hitler's army, became pastor of his own Lutheran sect in the Bonn area in the Fifties and fled on bail in 1961 after being charged with sexually abusing children at a youth home.

The Chilean police could hardly have used a more softly-softly approach when they entered the ranch on Tuesday, describing their incursion as "a visual inspection". Liberal Chileans were embarrassed and



Over the wire: Police talking with members of the German 'colony' on Tuesday Photograph: AFP

outraged, insisting the police "sightseeing tour" made a mockery of Chile's would-be democracy and showed that the German colony was in cahoots with at least the military branch of the police. They noted that the carabinieri commander, Julio Poo, had greeted a German leader of the colony by his first name at the colony's barbed wire fence. "The police made this look like a courtesy visit, not a raid," said Jaime Naranjo, a socialist MP. "This is just like Colombia, where the drug traffickers have a network of support and protection. They have two airstrips on this colony, for

God's sake." Indeed they do. The "colony" increasingly looms as a new threat to Chile's still-sensitive democracy, with the government of Eduardo Frei and his civilian police pitted against the traditional military establishment headed by General Pinochet.

Former Chilean intelligence agents and their victims have attested that the German colony was used by the general's military regime, after the 1973 coup that overthrew and killed the Marxist president Salvador Allende, to torture, kill and experiment on leftists. Some later identified Mr Schaefer as "the

doctor", saying he had spoken German and administered drugs to study their effects on torture victims. General Pinochet himself was said to be a good friend of Mr Schaefer.

The colony's German farmers and Chilean supporters insist Mr Schaefer is simply a hard working German immigrant and devout Protestant who sees nothing wrong with people working the land 14 hours a day, seven days a week, with no recompense other than the land's yields. He went underground because he fears a witch-hunt against him, they say.

A rare glimpse this week in-

side the perimeter of the colony showed women working, dressed Quaker like in calf-length frocks and black stockings.

Reaching the colony requires a rough 45-minute drive over a pot-holed gravel path east of Parí. While many of the 20,000 townsfolk of Parí criticised "Los Alemanes" (the Germans), those farmers nearest to the colony are protective of them because of vital mutual trade, and their own free use of the colony's hospital and school. Critics say the hospital and school are simply a charitable front to shield something more sinister. Some believe it is child abuse, others arms trafficking, but no one comes up with any more proof than has emerged from colony defectors.

Some Chileans say Mr Schaefer is an illusory figurehead. They believe he and his followers may have been placed as a diversion to attract attention from what may have been a long un-

derstandable refuge for former Nazis or Nazi sympathisers.

"I first visited them in the Sixties. My first surprise was the air strip, then the walkie-talkies every 100 yards," said Osvaldo Mural, of the Chilean magazine *Excilla*. "I thought 'what are they trying to hide?'"

"Later, it occurred to me that the Israelis were hunting all sorts of ex-Nazis throughout South America and what a good place to hide this would be."

Figurehead or no, Mr Schaefer is on the loose. Most likely, in this huge area of southern Chile that he has controlled for three and a half decades.

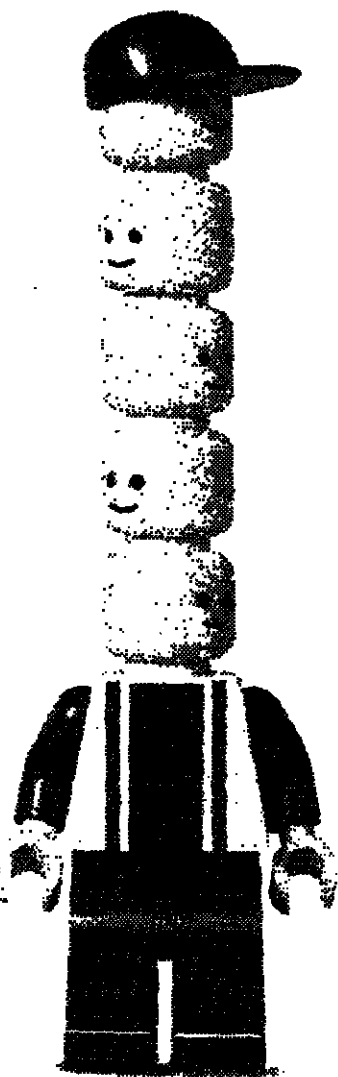
Mr Schaefer and a handful of friends set up Dignity Colony in 1961 after he fled the child abuse charges in Germany. Five years later, the first reports of abuse began to emerge after a teenage orphan, Wolfgang Mueller, fled the colony.

Last night, Mr Mueller, now in his forties, repeated his allegations to reporters and expressed astonishment that the Chilean authorities had still taken little or no action. "I think it's a real scandal," he said. "I remember the first night I arrived, Mr Schaefer abused me. I was just 12 years old but I had to stay all night in his bed."

Also 12 years old when he arrived here with Mr Schaefer was Herr X, a German who reluctantly spoke to me. "I was one of the first half dozen to come here in '61," he told me in strongly accented Spanish. "He practically educated me. We grow wheat here, and corn... we do mechanical work. We're self-sufficient. The criticisms of our lifestyle are pure fantasies, spread by German politicians."

"I can honestly say I've never seen people who respect life more than the inhabitants of this colony," added Jaime Mora, a local engineer, and a member of the so-called Circle of Friends who support the Germans. "They love life."

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Palestinian gagged by 'thought police'

Palestinian police yesterday detained a prominent Palestinian journalist in an apparent effort to prevent the live broadcast of the proceedings of the Palestinian parliament. The arrest of Daoud Kuttab is the latest move by the security forces of Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, to bring the Palestinian media under his total control.

Earlier Mr Arafat's Palestinian Authority, which rules the Palestinian enclaves, had jammed Mr Kuttab's television station, whose transmissions are the only way the Palestinian public can find out what goes on in the Palestinian Legislative Council, which they elected last year. The police are apparently eager to prevent the broadcast of allegations of corruption and brutality in the Palestinian leadership.

Mr Kuttab, an American-Palestinian who lives in Jerusalem, was detained after he was called to the police station in Ramallah, an autonomous Palestinian enclave.

His brother Jonathan said: "He got a call at 11pm last night to go to see Captain Faris of the criminal police to talk about the broadcasting of the Legislative Council. He phoned me from the police station in Ramallah at 2.30am to say he had been detained."

Mr Arafat's administration is

Arafat's men keep lid on claims of corruption and brutality, writes Patrick Cockburn in Jerusalem

deeply sensitive to attacks by members of the Palestinian parliament over its conduct of peace talks with Israel, reliance on 11 different security forces and use of torture. Such criticism is never mentioned by the official Palestinian press, radio or television, which always laud Mr Arafat and his lieutenants.

In order to publicise their proceedings, the Legislative Council several months ago gave Mr Daoud's Al-Quds Education Channel the right to

broadcast them live. To his astonishment he found that he was being jammed. Nabil Amr, the head of the Palestinian Broadcasting Company (PBC), the official Palestinian TV, denied that his facilities were being used for the jamming. But the reality proved to be different. When Mr Kuttab visited the PBC, he found the control room guarded by policemen, and technicians inside involved in jamming his station.

When Mr Arafat took control of Gaza and Jericho in 1994, many Palestinian journalists hoped that at last they could have their own media, free from Israeli control. But systematic intimidation by Mr Arafat's security forces has ensured it is becoming as compliant and uncritical as anything in Damascus or Baghdad.

Intimidation sometimes starts even before an article is even published, as Jibril Salameh, a lawyer in Gaza, discovered last month when he submitted a piece he had written to a local law journal. He daringly suggested that there was a lesson for Palestinians in

the way the Israeli police, investigating a political corruption scandal, had vigorously questioned Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, and his justice minister. He asked: "When will we see such examples implemented in the Palestinian Authority territories?"

Not only did Mr Salameh's article not see the light of day, but a lawyer on the journal passed it on to Khalid al-Kidreh, the Palestinian attorney general. Mr al-Kidreh promptly signed an order for the author's arrest, citing security reasons, and Mr Salameh disappeared into prison for ten days.

Bassam Eid of the Palestinian Human Rights Monitoring Group says that among Palestinians freedom of expression has become very limited. He repeats a sour little joke he heard in Gaza: "A man in Gaza has a toothache. He complains to his friends about it. His friends ask: 'Why don't you go to the dentist.' He replies: 'What is the point of going to the dentist when I'm forbidden to open my mouth?'"



Kuttab: Attempted to show parliamentary proceedings

Writing on the wall as Iranians go to the polls



Joint favourite: Iranian women walking past posters of the Iranian Parliamentary Speaker, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, who has backing from key clerical groups in his quest to become president in tomorrow's elections. Photograph: AFP

Israel looks to control West Bank water rights

The war for the control of land on the West Bank and Gaza escalated yesterday with an Israeli proposal to deny Palestinians the right to drill for water and Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, confirming that Palestinian land dealers who sell to Israelis will face the death penalty, writes Patrick Cockburn.

Ariel Sharon, the infrastructure Minister and an opponent of Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, is proposing that Israel declare its sovereignty over as much as 50 per cent of the water resources on the West Bank. A likely effect of the proposal is that Israel would pull back from a smaller proportion of the

West Bank than is demanded by the Palestinians.

Mr Arafat, in an interview with the daily *Yediot Aharnot*, said yesterday that Palestinian land agents who sell to Israelis were "a few traitors and we will apply what has been determined by law against them". He said that a Palestinian living in the West Bank towns of Hebron or Nabhus, could not buy land in Israel. Two Palestinian land dealers have been killed this month and a third has disappeared.

Controversy is still continuing over the United States government claim, leaked to the Israeli press, that 26 per cent of the houses in Jewish settlements on the West Bank and in

Gaza are empty, and the expansion of settlements is therefore unnecessary. The Israeli Central Board of Statistics say the true figure is about 12 per cent, which confirms the basic American point.

Israeli political observers note that the secret survey of Jewish settlements and the leaking of the results is the third time in as many weeks that the US has punished Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister. Earlier in the month an official in Washington leaked information about an Israeli spy in the US administration. The US is also marginally reducing aid to Israel and giving more to Jordan.

Piano Island echoes to sound of China's turbulent history

This is the only place in China where pianos outnumber bicycles. On Gulangyu Island there are more than 330 pianos – and no bicycles. No cars, either.

As one walks along the pedestrian-only roadways, it is music and birdsong that filter through the banyan trees, not traffic noise or pile-drivers. Ivy-covered wrought-iron gates open on to vast colonial-style shuttered mansions. Around one corner, a pretty white church sits in landscaped gardens. The air is clean, and not one smokestack chimney can be seen. Can this really be China?

Gulangyu offers that rarest of commodities on the Chinese mainland – peace and quiet. The British had an eye for the island's potential as a comfortable refuge when in 1842, after the first Opium War, they forced China to open Xiamen on the south-east coast as one of the foreign treaty ports. Across the harbour sat verdant Gulangyu, and that was where the interlopers set up home. A dozen foreign consulates were soon established, and with them came the missionaries – and lots of pianos.

"We have many pianos from Britain, because the climate here is damp so British pianos are better," said 59-year-old Yin Chengzong, who runs the island's music school. And the one-square mile "Piano Island", as it is called by the 20,000 inhabitants, is determined to live up to its reputation. There is the ferry building, which is shaped like a piano; and the island's concert hall, shaped, you guessed it, like a piano.

The history of the piano on Gulangyu is the history of the island itself. "In the second half of the 19th century the Western missionaries came here and brought the music," said Mr Yin. A tradition was quickly established. "The wives of the missionaries were very good music teachers. So they taught the lo-

cal Chinese." As Gulangyu developed as a Western enclave, scores of wealthy overseas Chinese also started to drift back, and built themselves stately European-style mansions, faced with exquisite art deco stonework and stucco decoration. And with them came more pianos.

Even when the Japanese invaders came in 1938, the music played on. Then in 1949, in the wake of the Chinese Communist victory, the Westerners and rich overseas Chinese departed. "But all the pianos were left behind," said Mr Yin.

During the first years of the new order, piano playing was politically acceptable, and by 1959, **GULANGYU DAYS**

Mr Yin's brother, Yin Chengzong, had emerged as one of China's most promising pianists, one of a number of star musicians to hail from Gulangyu.

In 1966, with the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution, the music stopped. A history of pianos and priests brought the inhabitants of Gulangyu no sympathy from the crazed Red Guards. Zhang Zhenzhen, the 46-year-old curator at the museum, said: "In some households I heard the pianos were smashed. The Red Guards came to our house and took away a lot of music books." Mr Yin added: "People just did not play the piano. Because Western classical music was considered like capitalism."

The Christian Yin family, like many others, were thrown out of their home. Mr Yin's famous pianist brother decided collaboration was the best chance of survival and became a favourite composer of revolutionary ballads – such as "A new song from the countryside" – for the Gang of Four.

At the end of 1976, after the death of Mao Tse-tung, the music re-started just as suddenly as it had halted. Mr Yin was the piano accompanist at the first public concert. "The young singers gave a better performance than the older ones who were shaking so much they could not sing very well," he remembered. His by now infamous brother left for America as soon as he could. Plans for a music school started in the early 1980s, and it opened in 1990 on top of a hill in a converted Thirties American missionary church. There are 180 full-time students.

Across Gulangyu, some old homes, including the Yin's, have been returned to their original owners. Others have been renovated as holiday homes for powerful state work units. Drawn by the seafood as much as the music, China's leaders often find the time for an inspection tour of Gulangyu. One photograph shows the prime minister, Li Peng, triumphantly holding a lobster at the Huang Yan Dong restaurant in 1995.

Deng Xiaoping came in 1984, and Richard Nixon also made it to the island. Like all VIPs they stayed at the Gulangyu Hotel, built in 1923 as a private house by the the Huangs, an overseas Chinese family from Indonesia.

The Huang descendants are not in residence. A hotel manager reluctantly explained: "The property belongs to the Huang family but the government runs the hotel and pays rent to the Huang family," she said. How much rent? "Well, in the past, the government did not pay any rent." So how much do they pay now? "Well, they don't actually pay rent now." So how does the Huang family feel about this? "Maybe the Huang family wants it back, but we don't know how to solve this problem."

Teresa Poole

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international

Kabila keeps low profile as new era dawns

Mary Braid
Kinshasa

Yesterday was Day Zero for the people of Kinshasa. Laurent Kabila, the new leader of the rechristened Congo-Zaire, took over the reins of power in the capital, sparking a frantic jostle outside the city hotel which has become the temporary headquarters for his new government.

Hundreds of men and women in their smartest clothes brandished curriculum vitae as they battled with security guards to get into the building in the hope of securing a job with the new regime.

"You see how desperate people are," said Paul, an unem-

ployed graduate who has been working as a translator. "Everything before is swept away – all the old patronage – and now people are insecure and uncertain."

Paul added that the low-key arrival of Mr Kabila in Kinshasa on Tuesday night – and his absence from public view since – had added to the unease replacing the wholesale euphoria which followed the ousting of Mobutu Sese Seko.

"We can see Kabila does not feel safe because he did not come during the day time," said Paul. "And that makes us also nervous."

As civil servants and white-collar workers fought for survival outside the hotel housing

Mr Kabila's alliance party, Mr Mobutu's former soldiers were queuing to sign up for Mr Kabila's army.

Earlier in the day, two of Mr Mobutu's generals, Amola Lukima and Michel Elési, jeered by a crowd of youths, turned themselves in at the city hotel.

The military transformation seemed to be going better than the political. Mr Kabila's aides met yesterday with political groups, including the city's most popular opposition figure, Etienne Tshisekedi, who had non-violently opposed Mr Mobutu's 32-year rule.

The alliance has repeated its commitment to holding elections. But last night Mr Kabila



Old regime, old evil: Kinshasans viewing torture chambers yesterday inside the looted Civil Guard headquarters

Photograph: Corinne Duffa/Reuters

had still not announced the members of an interim government, which would include opposition politicians. He had originally promised to do so within 72 hours of taking power.

Mr Tshisekedi's supporters were out on the streets of Kinshasa in force, demanding he be made prime minister after Mr Kabila's appointment of himself as president.

But at a meeting of Zimbabwese businessmen yesterday, the South African president, Nelson Mandela, castigated Western countries for lecturing Mr Kabila on

democracy. He suggested that this was rich, given the West's long support for the former dictator Mr Mobutu. President Mandela said Mr Kabila was already making good his pledges. But there is considerable concern at the alliance's lack of readiness for the monumental task ahead – pulling this huge, bankrupt country, with a non-existent infrastructure, back from the abyss.

The local currency, already almost worthless, seemed to be in free fall yesterday. Many had expected the alliance to

take immediate measures to stabilise the economy but diplomats say that the former rebels, still dizzy from taking the country so quickly, have so far formulated few, if any, policies.

Four British soldiers were reported yesterday to have been arrested in Brazzaville. British officials said the soldiers were part of the international evacuation force based there, but insisted that the incident was the result of a misunderstanding. Diplomats said they expected the soldiers to be released last night.

Mobutu's men still walking tall in New York

David Osborne
New York

Whatever may be happening in Kinshasa – the tearing down of images of Mobutu Sese Seko, the swooping into town at nightfall of Laurent Kabila, the re-naming of an entire country – at the United Nations headquarters in New York nothing is happening.

Here, in the citadel of world diplomacy, business goes on just as before as regards the third largest country in Africa. "As of now," the chief UN spokesman, Fred Eckhard, confirmed yesterday, "Zaire is still Zaire". And he adds, "And Mobutu's people are still the people here and who we deal with."

Peer out of Mr Eckhard's first-floor window and there, wafting in a gentle May breeze, is proof of this Zairean limbo. The flag of Zaire, ten poles down from the Union Jack, still flies defiantly, a square of pale green with a black arm and fist at its centre.

Indeed, wander to the conference rooms in the bowels of the buildings to where the com-

mittees of the General Assembly are in session and there, apparently engrossed in the debate at hand, is a diplomat from the mission of Zaire – one of, as Mr Eckhard puts it, "Mobutu's people".

None of this is considered particularly strange at the UN, which is perfectly used to countries suddenly reinventing themselves. The break-up of the Soviet Union brought the biggest reshuffle in the flagpoles outside ever. (The flags are hoisted from north to south according to alphabetic order).

Soon, one assumes, Zaire (and the gentleman still at the mission) will vanish from here too. Once a new government is formed, it must do two things: formally present a new ambassador to the UN, the credentialling of whom would then be approved by a UN committee.

It must also inform the UN Secretariat of the country's change of name. "Once there has been a critical mass of other governments recognising the new government, then we will make that acknowledgement also," said Mr Eckhard.

Harvard caught up in Moscow row

Phil Reeves
Moscow

Allegations of doubtful practices and ill-judged speculation are two a penny in Russia, where corruption has thrived since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Boris Yeltsin has pledged to clean the place up – a commitment echoed yesterday by the arrest of a former deputy defence minister and chief military inspector, Konstantin Kobets, on bride-taking charges.

But even the most hardened Moscow cynic will have raised a small eyebrow at the latest claims to surface here – that staff from Harvard University no less, that emblem of respectability and good practice, have been abusing their positions as advisers to the Russian government and misusing funds.

These amounts, it should be stressed, only to allegations, like most Russian scandals. But according to the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Boston Globe*, the US government has suspended a \$14m contract with the university after a preliminary investigation found that two staff had "abused the trust of the United States government by using personal relationship for private gain."

Since Russia's economic reforms began in 1992, Harvard scholars have been advising the Russians on how to manage the

transformation from a centrally planned to a free-market economy, a task that has included explaining how the capital markets function.

According to the newspapers, the US Agency for International Development (USAID) has written to Harvard to say that two employees – the general director of the world-renowned Harvard Institute for International Development, Jonathan Hay, and the project director, economics professor Andrei Shleifer – went beyond that brief.

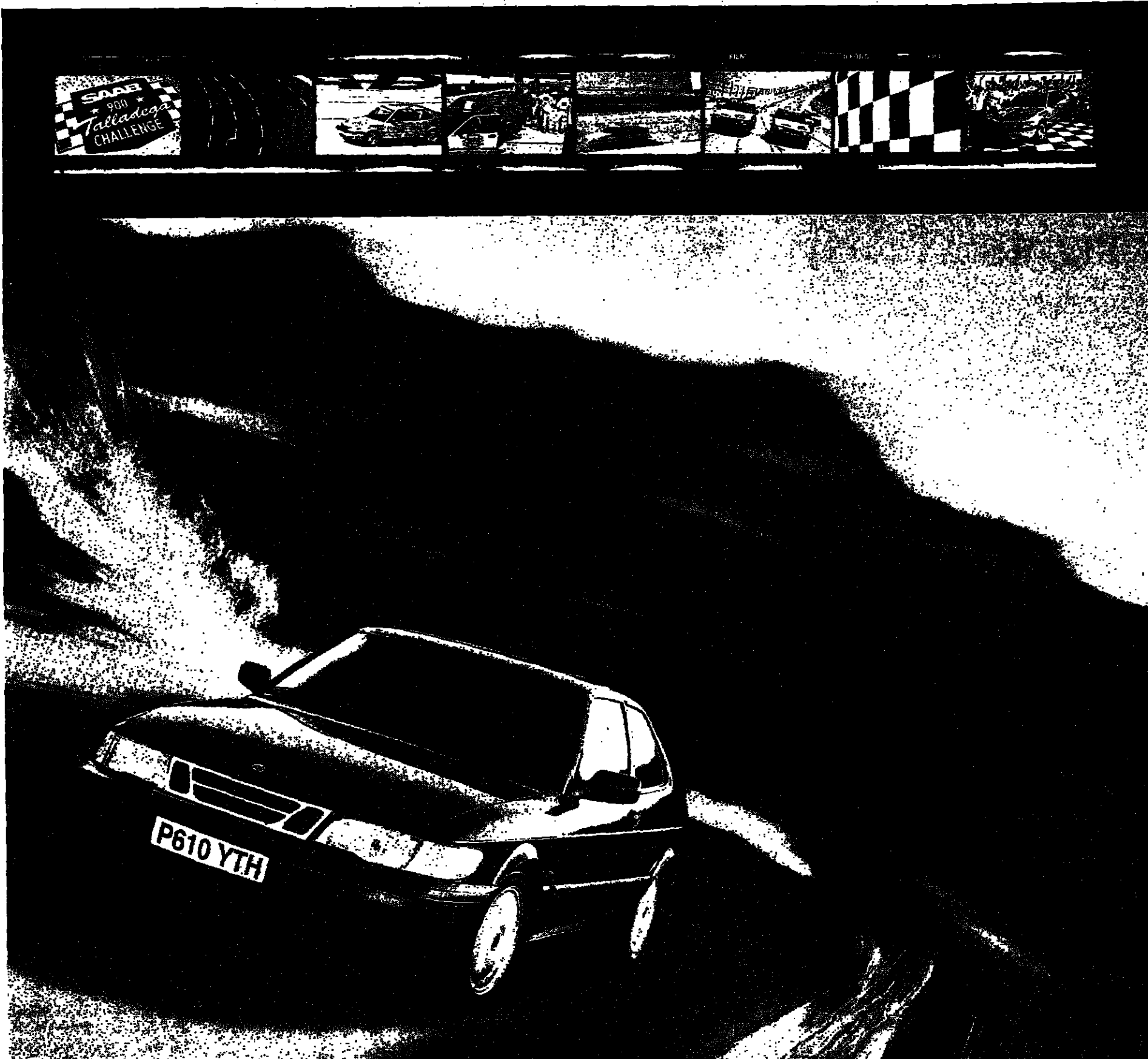
The agency has reportedly claimed that Dr Hay "used resources financed by USAID to support the private investment activities" of his colleague, Dr Shleifer's wife.

Support staff, paid by the American government, have been buying and selling bonds, compiling information about tax and tracking investments.

The two men's Washington-based lawyer, Michael Butler, said the USAID's letter was "wrong in its conclusions, wrong in its assumptions, inaccurate in its facts and foolish in its rhetoric."

The case is certain to run and run, doubtless spawning law suits as it goes.

But for Russians it is, at the very least, a reminder that all is not always as rosy as it sounds either in the cradle of democracy or in the stratosphere of its academe.



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The man who holds the key to Hindley's future



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Public opinion, a great home secretary once said, is a compound of folly, prejudice, wrong-feeling, right-feeling ... and newspaper paragraphs. On 1 May public opinion seemed to vindicate itself and, speaking with particular cogency about the need for political renewal, affirm our democracy. We witnessed the demise of a government that had become insensate, had swung too far from public sentiment. But, in a political culture in which right-wing tabloid newspapers owned by foreigners are so influential, hewing too close to perceived public sentiment can become a recipe for cowardice and retreat to the lowest common policy denominator.

A similar point can be made about the operation of the criminal justice system. To ignore the public's opinion about the gravity of certain offences and the fitness of punishment is to risk subverting the foundation of judicial legitimacy. For the courts to trim to passing flashes of public anger and immediate sensation would rob them of that particular quality of disinterest on which the rule of law equally depends.

At the fulcrum of the scales of justice sits that peculiar politician, the Home Secretary. That recent occupants of the position have played fast and loose with partisan disregard for consistency and dignity is neither here nor there. On the shoulders of the new Home Secretary, Jack Straw, lies responsibility for

upholding the rule of law while ensuring public sentiment about infractions is adequately recognised. The case in point is that of Myra Hindley.

She has benefited from the fashion for judicial review of executive decision-making. The murderer's lawyers have got leave to challenge Michael Howard's decision to affirm the Home Office's earlier imposition of a "whole life" sentence, amending a previous ruling that she serve a 30-year term. There may well be issues of procedure and propriety here. Given Mr Howard's carelessness and occasional indifference to legal form (first witness for the prosecution, Ann Widdecombe), it is possible he has given hostages to fortune. Say the court were to judge that Howard had acted outside his powers. All that would do is put Jack Straw in the front line: he would then have to decide what he is to do with Myra Hindley. But, almost regardless of the outcome of the judicial review, the new Home Secretary ought to make up his own mind on the case. For him to claim that his lips are buttoned is to let discretion take over from valour: it is tantamount to saying politicians ought to be permanently dumb in case their actions are challenged in the courts. That cannot be right.

As a Lancashire MP Mr Straw needs no instruction in how the memory of the Brady-Hindley crimes lingers, especially in the North-west. With time, other crimes and other events of horror fade

from public recollection, however long the relatives of victims may grieve; their perpetrators leave jail after serving their time, forgotten. But this offence has not been erased from public consciousness. Hindley's various noisy interlocutors and admirers have not helped her case; nor has the long delay in her revealing the full extent of her crimes. Reports of her own demeanour do not paint a convincing picture of a penitent. Perhaps it was also the cultural context of the crime – a side of the Sixties so distant from the music and fashion that gripped the popular imagination.

But is that relevant, if Hindley has

served an appropriate sentence and, like others who murdered in their youth, must no longer be considered dangerous? The trial judge said she should serve a very long time. She has. If the only considerations in the case were Hindley and the impartial operation on her of the homicide law, she would merit release.

But the Home Secretary must do more than check off boxes on a list of criteria. He has also to use his political imagination. At the use of that word some people will complain that the criminal justice system ought to be immune from politics. After all, our misgivings about mandatory sentences and

other "reforms" enacted by the Tories in recent years have been around the substitution of politicians' judgements for those of judges. As a broad principle it must be true that judges are largely there because they are better placed to execute justice than politicians, who are subject to whims and pressures that might undermine a balanced judgement.

But Jack Straw has responsibilities that no judge carries. On his shoulders rests public confidence in the legal mechanism, which is influenced by judicial outcomes. His, too, is the task of maintaining public order. The release of Myra Hindley threatens good order, both literally and figuratively. She would, out of jail, become prey. The media would hunt her, however many disguises and new addresses she went through. Avengers would stalk her. Considerable police resources would almost certainly need to be expended in her protection, and that would in turn feed public resentment and anger. To recognise this is not to bow down before the prospect of mob rule or succumb to atavism. No home secretary concerned for the good order of society would wish to provoke confrontation of this kind. That is the higher-minded reason for denying Myra Hindley her long-sought release.

There is a more cynical reason, but also one which will necessarily play a part. Jack Straw could be a first-rate Home Secretary. But he has a limited amount of political capital to expend.

He will have to take many more important decisions that either offend sections of his party or elements of the public. There is little point in wasting his political capital on Myra Hindley. He should be clear why he should keep this woman in custody, even if objectively she deserves her release. Public opinion about her is too fierce. For her own welfare incarceration must remain her fate.

Unearthed: little nuggets

The Manchester runaway tunnellers present us with a problem. Leading articles should, as above, consider the arguments, and stand on the side of right. But that approach is impossible to apply to people who call themselves Muppet Dave and Shagger, River Rats and Pixies, live in camps called Jimi Hendrix Zion or Sir Cliff Richard OBE Vegan Revolution. The fact is a public inquiry was held, local people mainly want the runway, its builders have dealt with many objections, and digging the protesters out is going to cost taxpayers a lot of money. Still, you can't help liking them. As one air pollution expert apparently said on meeting them, these delightful nut-cases are "little nuggets of joy", and we would be poorer without them. Even though they are wrong.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stop tinkering and just ban tobacco

Sir: In your editorial (20 May) you suggest that Labour's instinct is for blanket bans. As regards smoking, the Health Secretary's proposals are no such thing. I agree that there is something dishonest about making conduct associated with cigarettes such as advertising or sponsoring racing cars illegal but refusing to contemplate proscribing the action itself.

Tobacco smoking does more harm to health than any other external agent that we can identify. Our descendants will be completely bemused that a government in the 1990s allowed cigarettes to be sold while also knowing the health havoc that smoking produces. In Southend we have a large lung cancer study and in the 1990s we have already had over 1,500 deaths from lung cancer and this is in a population of just over 300,000.

What is required is a proper government programme aimed at producing a total ban on cigarette sales. In order to minimise the social consequences in terms of jobs, this programme could be set over 20 years. This would give companies the opportunity to diversify and employees to find new employment. Acts such as banning advertising and sponsorship of sports, although steps in the right direction, are in fact only tinkering at the edges.

Dr TONY DAVISON
Consultant Chest Physician
Heart and Chest Clinic
Southend Hospital
Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex

Sir: Your concerns about the oppressiveness of a state ban on tobacco promotion should be waved aside (leading article, 20 May). The addictive character of the product diminishes the smoker's ability to choose. The tobacco-related death toll of 300 per day would stimulate the most draconian action if it occurred as the result of any other activity – imagine if there was an air crash every day in Britain.

Frank Dobson's proposals do not go far enough. The tobacco industry's marketing budget should be visualised as a giant balloon of money – squashed it down in one place and it will bulge somewhere else. To eradicate the industry's pernicious image-making, the Government will need to ban all forms of promotion, including arts and all other sponsorship, direct mail, loyalty schemes and so on. A partial ban could lead to a legislative "arms race", whereby tobacco companies devise ever more ingenious promotional ideas, and the Government responds with controlling legislation. It would be sensible to anticipate the likely course of events and introduce a pervasive ban on all tobacco promotion from the outset.

CLIVE BATES
London N16

Sir: Your leading article of 20 May suggests that the NHS should start charging smokers. This is an excellent idea. Smokers should be made to take out private health insurance. A surcharge should be made, vouchers should be put in each cigarette packet, and when enough had been saved this would permit the smoker access to private healthcare.

Of course the present tax on each packet would have to be removed, which even with the health surcharge would more than halve the price, and the shortfall to the Exchequer would mean a sharp



Widdecombe and powers of night

Sir: Ann Widdecombe, figured as Nemesis in David Aaronovich's column (20 May), "waddled" into the Commons to put an end to both her political career and that of Michael Howard.

We are all aware, as (engagingly) is Miss Widdecombe herself, that she is a "butt of popular humour" (iron intended?). But if we take a liberty with classical tradition and suppose this particular Nemesis to have been an overweight, less than well-favoured, 49-year-old celibate male, would Mr Aaronovich's otherwise tolerably generous commentary have descended into the sexism suggested by "waddle"? Your editorial explicitly supports Miss Widdecombe. *The Independent* cannot have it both ways.

Dr RICHARD TODD
Amsterdam

Sir: Does Ann Widdecombe's crusade against the Howardian forces of darkness reflect the cosmic law that like attracts like? There has been a lot of discussion about this recently and I have first-hand evidence to suggest that it may be so.

On Monday I was listening to the PM programme on Radio 4. Just before the broadcast of Ann Widdecombe's statement to the House about Michael Howard, I had been washing up a frying pan along with its thick reinforced glass lid. The moment the sound of Ann Widdecombe's voice came out of my portable CD/radio set, the glass lid on the frying pan shattered dangerously into many sharp fragments of varying size for no apparent reason.

This must prove that in order to recognise "something of the night" in another person, one must possess a certain absence of the day in oneself.

BARRY COTTELL
Faringdon, Oxfordshire

Sir: As a linguist in a research unit monitoring change in language, I was fascinated to note the occurrence pattern of the word "prestidigitator" in *The Independent* of 20 May.

Our vast corpus of newspaper text estimates the rate of occurrence for "prestidigitator" to be once per 17.5 million words. Thus, I would expect your newspaper to carry the word less than twice per year. Indeed, our statistics show no "prestidigitator" whatsoever in *The Independent* newspaper during the 18-month period ending March 1990.

However, yesterday's *Independent* contained five "prestidigitator" in a single edition, as many as have appeared in your newspaper in total since October 1993. By my calculations, this defies odds of approximately 50,000 million to one. As, perhaps, Michael Howard must now do to become the next Tory leader.

STEVEN JONES
Research and Development Unit for English Studies
University of Liverpool

Modern barbarity

Sir: I was surprised to see in your report today (15 May) on the treatment of runaway protesters the expression "medieval brutality". Is this intended to indicate some moderate form of repressive conduct? If not, would not "20th-century brutality" be more apt? It is hard to think of a century which could equal ours in systematically callous disregard for basic rights.

Dr D A SYKES
Oxford

increase in income tax rates all round. However, this would be much fairer than the present situation, as the tax on tobacco is the most regressive of all. At present, low-income smokers subsidise the health care of middle-class non-smokers, and then get told by newspaper editors that they should be at the back of the health queue because of their habit.

The Rev DAVID E FLAVELL
(Ex-Smoker)
Peterlee, Co Durham

Sir: Your editorial (20 May) refers to "cigarette money contributing mightily to the diversity of sport, to widening fields of attainment and so to the greater pleasure of the participating and watching public". I completely disagree. Sport is nowadays not nearly as enjoyable as it was 20 years ago. The love of sport, amateurism and mild professionalism has been totally ruined by the intrusion of corporate advertising and greed. Witness one footballer being "sold" for £15m.

GERALD F C KING
Richmond, Surrey

Tough posturing no help on drugs

Sir: Could someone explain the ludicrous military vocabulary by which public figures always resort when discussing the use of illegal drugs ("Blair launches war on drug abuse", 19 May)?

The reality for many people is that drugs are not only socially acceptable, but socially ingrained. It is paranoid to suggest that there is some sort of identifiable subculture of drug abusers which must be attacked with words like

"launch" and "assault", and it is disingenuous to cite America as a success story. Whatever next? The policing miracle that was Prohibition?

I am not sanctioning drugs, nor am I pretending to know what the root causes are, but until these causes are identified and addressed and politicians and journalists leave the "moral" high ground and discard this farcical posturing about "being tough" on everything, there will be no improvements.

TOM CORNFORD
Selwyn College
Cambridge

Sir: Recent research by a Department of Health Task Force shows the taxpayer can benefit sevenfold from every pound spent on drug treatment. But, in order to deliver this benefit from reduced crime, treatment and rehabilitation services will need the resources to lead this investment.

Our research shows that people are already driven away from treatment and into continued drug misuse by lengthening waiting lists. Drug services continue to report growing demand turned away at their doors – and even closure. The real successes will only come with new thinking on redirecting resources – and even the assets seized from dealers – into the treatment which the Government is right to herald as a key way forward.

ROGER HOWARD
Chief Executive
Standing Conference on Drug Abuse
London SE1

Blunkett can end schools apartheid

Sir: I was glad to see from Donald Macintyre's interview with David Blunkett (21 May) that the Government is open to ideas on ways to open up private schools, beginning with the former direct-grant sector. Mr Blunkett is right to say that it cannot be done by the taxpayer footing the bill for people who might previously have paid for themselves. Hence the proposal in my book *We Should Know Better* that a version of the University maintenance grant system be applied to any private school volunteering to open its doors to all talents. Parents of pupils (like those of students) would pay on a sliding scale.

In higher education the aim was to widen access, and it worked. Our best schools, like our universities, should serve the whole nation, rather than reinforce the privileges of the well-born. While I support the abolition of the much-abused Assisted Places Scheme, in the absence of more radical measures abolition alone could simply entrench the apartheid of which Mr Blunkett speaks. My scheme would stand the APS on its head: entry to once exclusive schools would be by right, not grace-and-favour.

I welcome many of Mr Blunkett's pronouncements to date, for instance on teaching methods. Yet I fear that progress will be limited while Britain, alone in Europe, has not one but two

Recycle coastal towns' sewage

Sir: The amount of water wasted through leaky pipes may be difficult to ascertain (letter, 20 May) but another source of waste is easily proven.

Every day, Southern Water discharges the waste/sewage from 400,000 people into the sea off the West Sussex coast. Over 99 per cent of this effluent is water – fresh water.

If all the coastal water companies used inland sewage works, with the latest ultra-violet radiation that kills off most of the bugs, the resultant effluent would be so clean that, instead of taking water from the rivers and lakes as they do at the moment, it could be discharged there to be used again.

KENNETH SCUTT
Bognor Regis, West Sussex

Ali's fate strips boxing of excuses

Sir: Your remarkable review of *When we were kings* (15 May) and today's article about sporting giants (20 May) are the most emphatic and dramatic indictments yet of the "sport" of boxing. Today

Muhammad Ali, a heroic Titan of post-war decades, is a shambaling incoherent ruin of a man.

It would be amazing if this young ex-boxer's Parkinson's disease, an affliction of the elderly, were a coincidence. On the other hand, signs of Parkinsonism are very common in ex-boxers since they are part of the syndrome of brain damage caused by repeated blows to the head.

What further evidence do we need before the civilised world brushes aside the casuistic excuses for this most ignoble industry and bans boxing for good?

TONY VAN DEN BERGH
former inspector of the British
Boxing Board of Control
HELEN GRANT MD, FRCP
retired Neuropathologist
London NW3

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First steps: Tony and Cherie swing it for Labour, and (right) Lindy-hopping New Yorkers show how it's done
Main photograph: New York Times

New Labour, new dancing

The Lindy Hop, born 70 years ago in Harlem, is back. It's big in the US and spreading here. Forget swing voters, writes Ann Treneman, swing dancing is what counts now

Luigi Babe Scorsia is a cool cat in the hot world of New York swing, and he is a bit worried this. "You want to know who I am?" he demands in thick Brooklynese. "I'll tell you. I'm Luigi Babe, and people call me the Swing Mafia because I come in with an attitude." He also comes with a 1960 yellow Cadillac, brown double-breasted pin-striped suit and two-tone dance shoes. He likes to have a mull on his arm and a gold-tipped Sobranie on his lip.

And then all hell breaks loose on the dance floor, and Luigi Babe is where he likes to be: in the middle of a fully-fledged American trend. His retro nights used to attract a dozen or so friends; now hundreds of strangers arrive in zoot suits and slinky cocktail dresses to jitterbug to Benny Goodman and jump jive to the Flipped Fedoras. The Lindy Hop, born in Harlem 70 years ago, is back on the dance floor with a vengeance.

They are calling it the New Swing Era and it's the kind of thing that New Labour's scouts should really be noting. This is the perfect dance after a landslide victory, and offers an instant top-up to the feel-good factor. It's a Bill Clinton kind of thing: style is vital, substance not so important.

The revival began a few years ago in San Francisco and worked its way east. Now they are Lindy-hopping on both coasts, with a lot of jiving in between. "It's a big deal. Lots of the bands are beginning to tour and get good record deals now," says Michael Moss of the glossy *Swingtime* magazine.

But could this make it across the Atlantic? The original swing was a dance of rebellion, and the Lindy is said to have been named when Harlem's Savoy ballroom broke into lunatic antics upon hearing the news of Charles Lindbergh's transatlantic flight in 1927. After so many years of Tory tea-dancing, a few mid-air kicks do not seem out of place. It could be a case of New Labour, New Dancing.

Perhaps all that talk of swing voters was just a cover-up for something a bit more fun.

I tried to ask the spin doctors - Peter Mandelson is said to like a swirl or two himself - but not even a toe-tap was to be revealed at Labour party headquarters. The manifesto is silent on the subject, perhaps wisely. After all, there are all those kicks to the left and about-turns. And, of course, as a social dance it is just an "ist" away from the dreaded S-word.

But it does have the great plus of making for an atmosphere so upbeat that they could bottle the stuff and sell it. "It gives you a real buzz," says the Lindy-hopper and jive teacher Julie Oram at jitterbug night at Notre Dame Hall, off Leicester Square in London. "We get all kinds here. Barristers, students, social workers, postmen." So what does she think of New Labour, New Dancing? "Oh yes - it is the feel-good factor."

San Francisco is no stranger to this factor itself. It is at its best at Bimbo's 365 Club, the multi-level supper club built in

the 1950s that is now the city's top swing venue. Hundreds of young people arrive in vintage cars, wearing vintage clothes from fedora top to spat-shoed toe: it's a sip'n'swing sort of scene.

"It's the alternative rock kids who are going for this scene," said *Swingtime*'s Moss, "the kids who were into grunge, hip-hop, and all that. They just got sick and tired of going out and getting depressed listening to music. Now they can go out and listen to music and have a good time."

A man who insists on being called Mr Lucky agrees (which is just as well, because he writes for Moss's magazine). "These kids got tired of the same three rock chords that somebody ripped off from a Buzzcocks song in 1979 and turned into the industry of grunge rock. They've had it with the torn clothes and looking crummy. They want something with a little class, a little pizzazz, something that looks nice and, you know, crisp."

He himself is a singer and swinger who dabbles in something called Lounge, and, in fact, was just on his way to LA to attend *Lounge* magazine's third anniversary party. "My favourite song is a Hawaiian lounge version of 'Everybody Wants to Rule the World'."

It is no surprise that Mr Lucky and Luigi Babe know each other, or that Luigi has his own opinion about Generation X and the Lindy. "Why do kids love it so much? It's real simple. Are you ready for this, babe? Young kids are swing

dancing because it is positive. How do I know? Because they are telling me this. They get to embrace another human being in the dances of the Eighties, you didn't even need to have a partner. All they care about now is being embraced and feeling good."

Americans love to categorise, and swingers are not too out of breath to do just that. The main variation is between East Coast and West Coast swing, with the latter being slower and sexier. In addition, there is a generation gap of sorts, with more traditional dancers going for big band era-type events, while younger swingers head out to hear more modern groups such as Big Bad Voodoo Daddy and the Squirrel Nut Zippers.

Luigi Babe is not shy about stating his preference. "New York swing is faster, with a bit more edge and attitude. That's who I am. We call it Neo Pseudo Swing. This is a resurgence with a Nineties flavour. That's what I'm known for: putting the Nineties into swing. I'm not doing a rehash of what's been done before. What I do is high octane."

There is one problem with this scene, as 41-year-old Luigi

sees it. Cocktails. He doesn't like the glass. "I'm a tough guy. I can't go sipping with a straw. So I pick it up and spill it everywhere." He laughs. "I drink Jack and Coke because - you know what? - I like the glass. The kids drink blue, pink, green martinis."

Luigi suddenly remembers something else: he has a special drink named after himself. The Babe is red wine and Coke mixed together and he claims he was given this as a baby "because I was hyperactive."

Ask him about New Labour, New Dancing, but he doesn't know much about the British political scene, except that "that one guy was freakin' out". But he didn't specify Blair or Major. However, hazy political details are, he likes the NL/ND idea very much.

"New government? If I had the right connection, I could bring my dances out there. We have our own dialect here. Swango is swing and tango put together. Then there is the swingcha. I tell you what I need from you. I need to get in touch with a booking agent to bring the bands over there. You know how swing came to

England the first time - we brought it during the war. This is going to be the second invasion. I'm coming over there."

You heard it here first... but the British swing scene can hop along fine, even without Luigi Babe. The latest edition of the fanzine *Killer Diller* carries ads for zoot hats, a page three "hunk", a feature on jalousies, and a Benny Goodman excerpt from 1940. "Swing has to get inside you - and it will eventually, although it has to crawl in, through your ears, through vibration, through your pores," wrote the King of Swing. "You're saturated with it, hypnotized, and then, when a cat sends a tune 'out of the world', it fills every crook and cranny of your soul and mind. You start to shag! You peel the apple! You beat it down! You ride to town, ride right out of the world with the sender..."

Things are a little less exciting at Ruby's Dance Club on Carnaby Street, where Jocelyn Young (sister of Ruby) is teaching a beginner's swing basics. "Keep low, knees flexed. Dance into the floor. Three steps and then push back," she says.

Jocelyn used to go to lots of swing and jive dances. "Jive is good fun, and it would be great

if it did become more popular. Although some people now are really elite about it. If you aren't wearing the right shoes, they won't ask you to dance."

At Notre Dame Hall, the Lindy class is over, the lights are dimmed, the strobe is on, and the feet are moving too fast to see the shoes. Jerome Anderson is a Labour voter, a postman and a swinger. He sees a new world on the horizon. "Labour win, England win at the football, the feel-good factor will be everywhere. Jive will be part of that."

A man named Port Smith is setting the dance floor on fire, but takes a break while I shout my NL/ND question. He nods emphatically and shouts back: "New Labour, Old Dancing!"

That, of course, is a very dangerous word, and, as you read this, New Labour could be putting back on that boring old D:Ream track. But first, perhaps they should listen to Luigi Babe as he tips his fedora to a world where cool cats love an image just as much as Peter Mandelson: "Swing helps in this way too: if everybody dressed up, there would be no problems in the world, because no one would want to get their clothes messed up. Think about it..."

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Holes in pockets: a medical breakthrough

Many years ago, when I was a mere lad, I used to suffer from a regular disfigurement. It was a blue patch on my thigh. This blue patch, measuring about six square inches, used to appear regularly twice a year, suddenly, then fade away again, gradually. The doctors were baffled at first, but then traced it to the fact that I carried ballpoint pens in my trouser pockets.

"It's what we doctors call leaking pens," one explained to me. "You put the pen in your pocket. It leaks. All you notice is this blue patch on your leg. As a doctor, I would recommend you to use a pencil whenever possible."

And I did for a while, except that pencils have a nasty habit of coming through your trouser pocket and jabbing you in the leg, leaving your thigh looking as if it belonged to an unsuccessful graphite addict, full of injection marks surrounded by pencil shading. I finally gave up carrying writing things in my trouser pockets, and graduated to the more grown-up habit of secreting them in my jacket pockets. This, however, led

to another malady which the medical profession had never warned me about, namely holes in the bottom of my pockets. What happens is that the pen or pencil gradually creates a small hole in the base of your pocket and then disappears through it like a brave British prisoner of war breaking out of a camp through a tunnel.

Unfortunately for his escape plans, the pen or pencil then finds itself in the lining of the jacket, not much nearer to freedom, and pretty soon you get a collection of writing instruments lying inside your jacket along the lower edge, plainly tangible but unseen and inaccessible.

The only way they can be reached is by making a new hole in the bottom of the jacket, or by enlarging the pre-existing hole in the lining of the jacket and reaching down to get all the escaped things, neither of which is to be recommended unless you are fairly desperate for a pen, or unless one of them starts leaking. Better to start around with these invisible pens in your lining. At least you'll know there's one there if you really should need it.



Miles Kington

Now, things like this are an integral part of the growing process of many boys, though they have never been in any major novel that I have come across, and there comes a time when we outgrow such foolish things. I have not had a blue thigh patch for years and years. Most of my jacket pockets are intact, and I have hardly a jacket with anything down the lining. (Though I have recently noticed some very small objects lurking in the depths of my dinner jacket, way down in the lining.

I think these may be small wooden toothpicks of the kind used to spear bits of cheese or small sausages at receptions and which I tend to stick into my lapel pocket if there is nowhere else to put them. Presumably they then work their way down in the traditional manner.)

But I have recently noticed another malady attacking my person in the shape of weakened trouser pockets. Occasionally I will put loose change in a trouser pocket, not realising the pocket has begun to leak, and the money will then fall through a hole on the pocket, rattle down my leg like a fireman down a pole and reappear, cascading over my shoe. Bit embarrassing, really, when you're meant to be an adult. And the reason that my pockets are giving way, I think, is that I am inflicting an abnormally large key-ring on them.

Bunches of keys, like paunches and fingernails, just grow and keep growing unless something is done. I don't think I owned a key until I was about 20, but thereafter you start acquiring more keys in dribs and drabs

until... well, until I now have a bunch of a dozen or more keys, some of which I use a lot and some of which I never use and cannot even identify, but which I hang on to just in case, and every time I merely get the keys out to let myself into my house, I jangle like a warder going into a prison. And because you cannot get many keys on one ring, I find that my keys are on half a dozen different rings, strung together like those molecular models you occasionally glimpse on Open University programmes...

"That's funny," said the doctor, last time I had a check-up. "You've got a blue patch on your thigh. Wonder what it can be?"

"Leaking pen?" I suggested. "No, don't think so. Looks more like a bruise. Do you keep anything heavy in your trouser pocket?"

"Yes. A bunch of keys." So I have learnt something about life after all. Two things, actually. One is that everything leaves a blue patch on your thigh. The other is that if men really cared about clothes they would have started carrying handbags years ago.

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Even now, they still perform the rite of spite

This was a gathering of an ancient cult, last remnants of a breed we thought died on 2 May. But no, not quite. All the high priests of the anti-welfare coven were there at the Social Market Foundation conference, "The Future of Welfare" - starring US grand wizard Charles Murray (*Loosing Ground, The Bell Curve*). Spells were cast amid calls for ritual human sacrifice, mainly of single mothers and their babies.

Lord Skidelsky, chair of the foundation, economist and Conservative peer, stirred the cauldron first with the theme of his book calling for an end to social security, a huge tax cut, privatising education and the NHS. Bang! The welfare state gone in a puff of smoke.

Assembled was an eminent mixture of people who had no truck with this cult - top civil servants, policy makers, movers and shakers from the Treasury, DSS and the Audit Commission. But all the old clansmen were there too - the ghosts of policies past, such as Sir Alfred Sherman.

A few weeks ago all this would have been ominous, but now it was almost entertaining. They thought the unthinkable all right and it was indeed, well, unthinkable. Whatever Frank Field has been sent away to think, he made it plain in his own short presentation that this is not the way his mind is working. Why these people always thought he was one of them is a mystery. He is a Christian, they are cannibals.

Skidelsky begins with the convenient assumption that we cannot afford the welfare state. He quotes Tony Blair, who of course, said nothing of the sort. What Blair actually said was, "We have reached the limit of the public's willingness to spend on an *unreformed* [my italics] welfare system." Well, there are few people who doubt that it must be reformed, but the far right prefers to believe it cannot be afforded at all. "High tax weakens entrepreneurialism and welfare weakens the resolve to work." That is Skidelsky's real beef: affordability is just a red herring. Of course a country twice as rich as it was in 1945 can afford it, so long as it is prudently run.

The far right are a strange bunch. First there was Myron Magnet, a famed US anti-welfare guru who sports bushy mutton-chop whiskers and speaks like Elmer Gantry, all parables and slogans, few statistics: the middle classes of the Sixties are to blame for everything - "personal sexual fulfillment" (yuk) and the "rebellious imperatives of the self" (disgraceful) percolated down to the poor who lost all shame in taking welfare. Roger Scruton said poverty is a good thing as the poor remind us of our social duties. Others said visible poverty teaches the consequences of improvidence. Skidelsky mused that in medieval times great sanctity was attached to poverty. Someone else advocated free rice, beans and powdered milk in buckets in the street - but nothing else: while another ideologue quoted Tacitus who said giving away free corn caused the fall of the Roman empire.

Then came the Prince of Darkness himself, Charles Murray, who believes poverty is genetic. Illegitimacy is the real problem, he says, whether or not the mother is working and supporting her family. He didn't really explain why a man - any man - is the answer, but he wants no benefits for single mothers. "We will have to hurt them," he says, licking his Dracula lips. "They must know that disaster awaits." They must suffer a lot, yes indeed and publicly.



Polly Toynbee
Murray, Prince of Darkness, said single mothers must suffer. He is not for tough love but for tough hate

Murray is not a man for tough love but tough hate.

Now into this seething morass steps Frank Field for his first ministerial appearance. He had no announcement, but we listened to the timbre of his language and his words fell as soothing balm on ears scorched by previous speakers. He does not blame the poor for their plight. Quietly, he talked of the one third of manufacturing jobs for unskilled young men that had vanished since 1979, leaving whole communities with no means of support. "Understanding rather than condemnation" was required. He wants welfare to become once again an engine for social advance and betterment. Bad education was the recruiting sergeant for welfare dependency, and low-achieving girls needed "a hand-up, not a put-down" to prevent them becoming mothers too young.

Now we do not know quite what he means yet. But one thing is certain, he does not belong in this tribe. The old left branded him as a right-winger when he first said out loud that the system offers all the wrong incentives and is riddled with fraud. But anyone who ever comes in contact with the lives of the unemployed knows that to be true. We do not need staring-eyed right-wing fanatics to tell us that.

The system traps those it is supposed to help. It is too difficult for claimants to move in and out of temporary work and too out of temporary work and too easy to sink into lethargy and do nothing. It is too easy for the young to slide into a marginal non-working alternative life on the dole. It is almost impossible for single mothers to work without after-school schemes for their children.

It is frighteningly easy for small time or professional fraudsters to swindle on a massive scale. We do indeed need fresh thinking. The current Project Work pilot schemes have already shown how intensively supervised job searching, backed with compulsory work, gets up to 40 per cent of claimants off the books. Labour has a better scheme, with real paid work and better training, but the effect will be the same. Workfare will be mostly carrot, with a bit of stick for the under 25s and the long-term unemployed - and the signs are it will work.

Once the taxi-driver vote is convinced that fraud and idleness have been squeezed out of the system, then, as Field said, there should be greater public support for social security. For there will always remain a large number of people who cannot work - sick, old, mentally incapable, unemployable or living in the Barrows and the Jarrows where no work is to be had.

But it will not be as easy as Labour's election slogans made it sound. A brilliant speech by Two Brains David Willetts, former minister and social security *aficionado*, explained just how difficult reform will be. He pointed out that trying to make a smooth staircase out of benefit into work is fraught with problems: you iron out the steepest steps, only to re-create them further up or lower down the chain. Making family credit more generous to get more people on to it creates its own traps and linking the tax and benefits system will not solve that dilemma. All the same, his "Nothing can be done" message was another reminder that even the best brains in government need time off for replenishing from time to time.

Well, now we shall see if the two brains of Harman and Field can prove him wrong. One thing is certain, whatever "unthinkable" they come up with, it will not inhabit the same intellectual universe as Lord Skidelsky and the US anti-welfarists.

Sorry, sorry, sorry. My profuse apologies. God, I'm sorry. Words cannot describe how prostrate, how wretched, how remorseful I am. Indeed, I am exhausted with saying sorry. For the last three weeks I have been taken to task by what seems like thousands of people demanding apologies for the most extraordinary things.

The other day I was talking on the radio about the history of book illustration (about which I am, of course, an internationally renowned expert and genius). I interviewed artists, agents, picture commissioning editors. Lots of exciting and controversial points were made about lithograph and woodcut technology. But do you know the only thing listeners responded to? They wrote to complain that I had repeatedly pronounced the word "ill-yew-stration" rather than "ill-uss-tration". Scores of phone calls to the Duty Officer jeered at "this fake-Edwardian affectation", as one apoplectic caller put it. "Ill-yew-stration, eh?"

Reeling from this onslaught, I then wrote a mild and appreciative piece about the new Department of National Heritage, in which I said Tony Banks, the Minister of Sport, was turning, a bit effortfully, into a job to fit his new status. Being myself a globally respected connoisseur of the game, I said knowingly that Banks, in his beer-swilling, laddish way, "comes on like a prospective editor of *When Saturday Comes*", the soccer



Widdecombe's choice - should go down a bomb

magazine. Hardly was the ink dry on the newsprint before the editor of *When Saturday Comes* was on the blower. Look here, he said, I'll thank you to keep a civil tongue in your head. I am not a job. Our readers are not Rolling Rock-swilling boogymen. They are, *au contraire*, mostly fellows of All Souls, theology students, rocket scientists and designers of chess computers, with a smattering of trendy novelists among them. Apologise at once ... And of course he was right, and I do. To get away from all this apologising, I flew to Monte Carlo to write about the grand prix (I am also, it goes without saying, a transcontinentally acclaimed commentator on Formula One racing) for this paper. I reported on the sound, the sights, the people, the food, the sponsors, the Eurobates, and finally the cars. I mentioned the striking lines of Frantzen's car, a ... what was it? A Renault? No name appeared on its handsome tin side. Back at the hotel I flicked through *Chequered Flag* magazine and there, in brackets, after Frantzen's

name, was "Saubert". Unfortunately, I was looking at the placings for last year's grand prix. Two seconds after the resulting article was published, a distant rumble could be heard and several thousand letters of crushing and satirical intent came flooding in from car buffs all over the known world. Once again I stood revealed as the last word in ignorance, the essence of dim. Mr Sorry in person. It's a good job I took out the paragraph questioning the legality of the bald tyres on Schumacher's Ferrari ...

Ann Widdecombe, a woman clearly surprised to find large numbers of people prepared to like her for possibly the first time in her life, is going on Radio 4 in July. She will appear as a guest on *A Good Read*, the book programme devised by the late Edward Blishen. And what will she be choosing as her favourite piece of non-fiction? Why, Antonia Fraser's colourful narrative history *The Gunpowder Plot*. An interesting, if puzzling, choice. Why Ms Widdecombe should enjoy reading about a fanatical Catholic convert who plants an enormous bomb under a lot of corrupt and complacent politicians is anyone's guess.

Congratulations to Kathy Burke, who won the Best Actress award at the Cannes Film Festival. She got it, of course, for her role as the mother in Gary Oldman's film, *Nil by Mouth*. But did it strike anyone else how poignant it was that the prize was presented by Hugh Grant, for whom the title of Ms Burke's film must hold an amusing resonance?

My spies in the nation's playgrounds report that nothing like it has been seen since the days of Cabbage Patch dolls. (Remember those odious, pudding-eyed little people that children could buy complete with individual birth certificate, national insurance number and

The plot thickens ... Ann Widdecombe's favourite piece of non-fiction is a book on Guy Fawkes

john walsh



assembly line. It's a bit of a learning curve for today's 10-year-old, although it tells you more about the eternal verities than the Spice Girls video.

At present, you can't buy one (recommended retail price £10; current price in the shops about £14) in London. Launched last week, the emetic little things are flooding out of Hamley's and Toys R Us like a stampede of bolting shoplifters. Last Friday, an unadvertised consignment of 1,000 Tamagotchis sold out in three hours (one per customer, maximum). Japanese businessmen in London, I'm told, go mad for them, especially the comparatively rare white ones, after a Tokyo pop star was seen on parental chatting in a parental kind of way to his wife-encased blob. According to my sources here, both sentimentally disposed 11-year-old girls and gruff, burly, rugby-playing 15-year-old boys are alike fixated by these noisome homunculi. "They're terribly addictive," insists a woman friend. "I worry about mine all the time." Why? "I've developed a fixation that, if I neglect it, it'll do a poo in my handbag."



Virtual pets can be a handful: the sought-after Tamagotchi

The Flash that struck the City

Gordon Brown has learnt from the ghosts of chancellors past, says Jack O'Sullivan

The speed with which the new chancellor has gone about radical reform has justifiably earned him the nickname Flash Gordon. In just a few weeks, Mr Brown has handed interest rate decision-making over to the Bank of England and, then, just as surprisingly, shorn the Old Lady of her role as regulator of financial institutions. No one has burst into the Treasury in quite that fashion before. "Chancellors don't usually hit the ground running like this," says Edmund Dell, a former president of the Board of Trade and author of *The Chancellors* (HarperCollins). "They tend to take a little time finding out about the job because they don't generally know much about it when they begin."

"I cannot think of any precedent for a chancellor who has acted so decisively," says Lord Jenkins, who himself moved into No 11 Downing Street 30 years ago and, as a political biographer, knows a thing or two about previous incumbents. "I admire the way Gordon Brown has gone about the task."

Jenkins is particularly impressed because, as he says, "most chancellors take over in a crisis and then make the wrong decisions. In Gordon Brown's case, he has not got a crisis on his hands. He has underlying public finance difficulties, but no great short-term problems."

In the Commons on Tuesday, Kenneth Clarke made a blistering attack on his successor, accusing him of "making policy on the hoof, as he did

in opposition". But Lord Callaghan, Labour chancellor between 1964 and 1967, thinks Gordon is more than a flash in the pan. "He seems to have worked out his programme and methods needed to a higher degree than I can remember of previous governments. So much attention was focused on this new government in opposition that they were forced to refine their policies and ideas." And, in any case, he says, the Brown initiatives spring from well-rehearsed public debates. "The question of the Bank's responsibilities have been debated for a long time. There are no new arguments."

Nevertheless, Brown's speed remains startling. We have become accustomed to a succession of Tory chancellors - Howe, Lawson, Major, Lamont and finally Clarke - whose reigns merged into one another, and certainly were not begun in such dramatic fashion. Lawson will be remembered as the tax-cutting and reforming chancellor, who had a boom named after him and got out before the bust. But he took his time. So did John Major who waited a year before his disastrous decision to join the European Exchange Rate Mechanism. Lamont was hardly Stormin' Norman, living with the mess Major left, and Clarke did not rush into any early budgets. The then Sir Geoffrey Howe was perhaps the quickest on his feet, abolishing exchange controls in 1979, five months after taking office, a move that was arguably as important as giving the Bank its independence. So what's the hurry Gordon? Lord



Callaghan offers a clue. "I remember," he says, "when I was appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Transport in 1947, there was a wise old permanent secretary, Sir Cyril Hurcomb. I was just in my early thirties and

it was my first ministerial post. He said, 'Pari Sec, whatever you want to do, take the decision in the first three months. After that the bureaucracy will have built up and will stop you.' It was good advice."

It helps, of course, if you are at one with your prime minister. "Brown could never have done these things without Blair's backing," Dell says. Contrast that with the frustration which accompanied Nigel Lawson's chancellorship, when he failed to win Margaret Thatcher over to joining the ERM and to making the Bank of England independent.

Brown's behaviour may also reflect worries about his Labour predecessors. In Callaghan's case, he will remember that within days of Labour's 1964 election, the then chancellor came to a very rapid decision - not to devalue the pound. "It was," says Callaghan, "a political decision, because we would have been hung, drawn and quartered by the Tories at the time. To devalue then was like sinning against the Holy Ghost." But it was, says Callaghan's successor, Lord Jenkins, the wrong decision. Three years later a sterling crisis was prompted by the 1964 decision, so forcing the devaluation which should have taken place years before. Failure to take the right decision at the right time cost Callaghan his job.

And then there was the tardiness of Jenkins. Following the devaluation, he waited four months before introducing a deflationary budget - a delay that left the markets jittery and led to talk

of another devaluation. "With perfect hindsight," he says now, "the budget would have been better sooner." Little wonder that Jenkins adds: "Well done to Gordon Brown for acting decisively and quickly."

Failure to take the tough decisions quickly enough afflicted earlier Labour administrations. Hugh Dalton, Labour's post-war chancellor, avoided a deflationary budget in 1945 by dispatching John Maynard Keynes to Washington to raise cash from the Americans. But Keynes came back with half what was expected and in loan rather than grant form. That led to the sterling crisis of 1947 and a harsh deflationary budget, which was two years too late.

Mr Brown may be keen to move quickly to take the tough decisions; but his immediate Labour predecessor, Denis Healey, thought he had learned the lesson of previous dilatoriness, and it did not do him much good. He held his first budget with amazing speed - just three weeks after the 1974 general election. The budget was designed to deal with the enormous balance of payments deficit resulting from the oil price hike. But in the rush, the Treasury got its forecasts wrong with the result that public borrowing rose rather than fell. The mess had to be cleared up in a second budget later in the year.

Many chancellors have been ruined by doing too little too late. Others have just been unlucky. Labour's ghosts suggest Flash Gordon is right to act fast. But more important than being quick is being right.

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His landslide victory owed nothing to the rousing oratory or skills in backroom deal-making that are the normal qualifications for political suc-

Photograph: Rex

Colin Harding

Virgilio Barco Vargas, politician: born Cúcuta, Colombia 17 September 1921; Representative to Congress of Colombia 1949, Senator 1958; Minister of Public Works 1958; Ambassador in London 1961-62; Minister of Agriculture 1963 and 1990-92; Mayor of Bogotá 1966-69; Ambassador to the United States 1977; President of Colombia 1986-90; married 1950 Carolin Isaksen (one son, three daughters); died Bogotá 20 May 1997.

Tom Stuart-Smith

Richard Henry Martin Robinson, gardener and horticultural photographer: born Hendon, Middlesex 21 March 1917; twice married (one son, and one daughter deceased); died 27 March 1997.

Ann Burkinshaw was born and educated in Aldershot, Hampshire, with a brief spell in Egypt which gave her a taste for travel and a certain air of indomitability. She worked abroad for the World Council of Churches for a time in her native land, then in the Sudan, and at Swansea University and qualified as a social worker in the early Seventies. She then found herself working in Bryn-y-Neuadd Hospital, in Llanfair-fach, Gwynedd, one of the larger, old-fashioned, mental subnormality hospitals, where she began to articulate the needs of residents for sex education and support in their relationships. She believed passionately that service users deserved to be given the information needed to make sense of their own lives and personal options.

The seriousness with which she addressed her work was balanced by the pleasure she took in her personal life. She was a wonderful company and had many friends all over the world, having spoken and worked in Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, America, Belgium, Israel, Iceland and Italy. She was an intrepid sightseer and eater of sea food - I remember sitting on

craft: breaking a taboo

Hilary Brown
1937-88; social worker; born Aldershot Hampshire 5 June 1943; Research Associate, Department of Learning Disabilities, Nottingham University 1987-88, Lecturer 1988-92, Senior Lecturer 1992-96, Reader 1996-97; Director of Napsac 1992-97; married Michael Crafts (marriage dissolved); died Nottingham 13 April 1997.

He had visited the islands in parliamentary delegations in 1931 and 1933. This gave him first-hand knowledge of the islands before and just after the 1932 Argentine invasion. It was Shernby's book which took the Falkland Islands to the attention of the 1981 British Nationality Act. He pushed through the House of Commons his own private member's Bill, British Nationality (Falkland Islands) Act of 1983, in a formidable partnership with Baroness Vickers, who steered it through the House of Lords. It was a measure of Shernby's popularity and of the respect he commanded in Parliament that the measure was enacted with a wide-spread backing.

BIRTHS

Birthdays

The Institute of Chartered Accountants was not entitled to charge **Value Added Tax** on the charges it made for granting licences and certificates to practitioners in accountancy who carried on investment business, practice as auditors, or practice in insolvency.

The Court of Appeal dismissed the appeal of the Institute of Chartered Accountants against the decision of Mr Justice Tuckey.

Andrew Thornhill QC and Rupert Baldry (Denton Holl, Milton Keynes) for the appellants; Kenneth Parker QC (Solicitor Customs & Excise) for the respondent.

LAW REPORT

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It had then gone on to consider whether under Articles 4.1 and 4.2 of the Sixth EEC Directive (77/388/EEC) the supply of the regulatory licences was an economic activity. Whilst accepting that the scope of the words "economic activity"

From the authorities it could be concluded that the concept of "an economic activity" was one which typically was performed for a consideration, and was connected with economic life in some way or another. It was not, however, an essential characteristic that in

Accordingly, the judge's decision would be upheld.

FEATHS

mer chairman,
Mrs. Betty W.

British Museum: Christopher Date, "Extreme beauty ... promising use": the British Museum and photography". 1.15pm.

Luncheons

The Rev and Mrs John Culme; Mr and Mrs John Culver; Mr and Mrs Alastair Farley; Mr and Mrs Edward Holt; The Rev and Mrs David Lucy; Mr and Mrs Colin Liddell; Mr and Mrs Magnus Linklater; Mrs Ann McCarter and Mr Iain McCarter; Mr and Mrs Andrew Roelae; The Very Rev and Mrs Hugh Wyllie.

Mr Robin Cook

Andrew Thornhill QC and Rupert Baldry (Denton Hall, Milson Keynes) for the appellant; Kenneth Parker QC (Solicitor, Customs & Excise) for the respondent.

Lord Justice **in granting li**

The institute had appealed to the VAT tribunal, which

Аннотация

Anniversaries

Luncheons

Lord High Commissioner
The Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Lord Macdougall of Eglar, will preside at luncheon given by the Glasgow branch of the Scottish Women's Union.

Foreign and Co

Lord Justice Beldam said that in granting licences and certificates to accountants who carried on investment business or practised in auditing or insol-

Y and Justice Y

had concluded that it had not established that its practice of regulation activities amounted to the carrying on of business for the purposes of section 4(1) of the Value Added Tax

The *Independent's* main switchboard

business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-293 2636 fax 0171-293 2098
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

George thought of quitting over Bank reforms

Tom Stevenson
Financial Editor

Eddie George considered resigning his position as Governor of the Bank of England in protest at the abrupt removal of his powers of banking supervision this week. The Bank was informed of the transfer of its regulatory authority to an enlarged Securities and Investment Board only 24 hours before the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, announced the move in the House of Commons on Tuesday.

Speaking at a rare press conference in the Bank yesterday, Mr George put a brave face on the latest attempt by the new Government to modernise the running of the economy. He attempted to play down the lack of consultation with the Treasury but admitted he had thought about quitting after the removal of another of the Bank's key functions.

The removal of the Bank's regulatory powers has been

seen as a rebuke from the Government for its perceived failure to prevent the collapse of BCCI and Barings.

Mr George warned against reading too much into the lack of consultation, saying the Bank's views on the subject. But he added: "All sorts of things go through your mind at times like this."

The Governor made it clear he was unhappy with the speed with which the announcement had been made, only two weeks after the Treasury had also taken over the Bank's 300-year-old responsibility for managing the Government's debt through its oversight of the gilt market. He said: "The surprise was in the timing. We wouldn't have made the changes at this time."

The Chancellor caught the City on the hop on Tuesday with the announcement of wholesale changes to the system of financial regulation that governs the behaviour of banks, securities houses and insurance companies. The main planks of his proposed changes were the creation of a single super-regulator, headed by Howard Davies, currently deputy gov-

ernor of the Bank of England, and the transfer of banking supervision from the Bank.

Stripped of one of its core functions, the Bank's responsibilities now focus on monetary stability, where its role was boosted by the announcement two weeks ago that it would be free to set interest rates, and the overall stability of the financial system.

Mr George cautioned yes-

terday that the super-SIB must be careful to avoid becoming a "bureaucratic monolith". He said: "It is enormously important that different types of financial service activity are regulated in different ways. I am confident that Howard Davies is totally sensitised to the need to maintain a balance between innovative vigour on one hand and protection of smaller, less-

sophisticated investors and savers on the other."

But he dismissed the suggestion that two regulators should have been set up to separate the supervision of retail and wholesale financial services: "That distinction is easy to say but difficult to draw."

One of the crucial areas going forward, according to Mr George, would be making the re-

lationship between the new single regulator and the Bank work effectively. One possible fault line in the proposed system was the Bank's ability to ensure financial stability without the information it had gleaned up to now from its role as regulator.

A large part of the running of the new SIB's supervision of the banking sector is likely to fall on some of the 425 staff who work on regulation at the Bank. Despite the transfer of many of the jobs to the new regulator, the finance union, Bifu, expressed concern yesterday about the proposed changes.

The Bank has known for a fortnight that changes in banking supervision were coming yet they failed to alert their own staff and their union," said Ed Sweeney, Bifu general secretary. Another 80 staff in the Bank's markets operations division are already facing uncertainty over their futures after Mr Brown's decision to transfer debt management to the Treasury.

Comment, page 25

Interest rates expected to go up again next month

The Bank of England has signalled the likelihood of a further increase in the cost of borrowing. Eddie George said yesterday that the short-term inflation outlook was "extremely encouraging" but he was concerned that strong growth was building up longer-term pressures, writes Diane Coyle.

The Governor was repeating the warning he had given Kenneth Clarke, the former Chancellor, at their April meeting. Newly published minutes of the meeting showed the Bank had strongly recommended a quarter-point

increase in base rates. "What we're also seeing is robust domestic demand growth at a rate which can't be sustained for very long without actually giving rise to inflationary pressures further down the track," Mr George said in a radio interview yesterday.

According to the minutes, he told Mr Clarke the need for a tighter policy in order to have a chance of meeting the inflation target two years ahead had become more urgent. The Bank recommended "making a start now".

Although the former Chancellor

turned down the advice ahead of the election, Gordon Brown raised base rates to 6.25 per cent within a week of polling day.

With figures yesterday showing the housing market robust and a strong rise in consumer borrowing last month, most analysts expect the Bank to announce a quarter-point increase in June or July. Figures from the main high street banks and building societies yesterday showed the housing market recovery continued, while other consumer borrowing increased.

New mortgage lending by building societies rose slightly compared with March to £1bn, about the same level as a year ago despite the transfer of National & Provincial and Alliance & Leicester to the banking sector.

Mortgage lending by banks was almost the same as in March, at £740m, and up from £568m a year earlier. The banks reported the second-highest total on record for consumer loans, at £1.2bn in April. However, the growth in total lending by banks and building societies declined a shade to 8.9

per cent year on year. Likewise, growth in M4, the broad money measure, slowed to 10.4 per cent from 11.2 per cent in March.

Analysts reacted cautiously as transactions in the gilts repo market accounted for much of the slowdown. Monetary growth in double digits will still concern the Bank. The minutes showed that Mr George had drawn attention to strong M4 growth in the April meeting. He also said that the pace of earnings growth, since revised down, was uncomfortably high.

F1 teams threaten float delay

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Leading Grand Prix teams are threatening to hold up the high-profile flotation of the Formula One motor racing business until the autumn in a dispute over the size of the share stake allocated to the constructors.

The top teams, led by Williams and McLaren, are unhappy with the 10 per cent stake in the floated company to be distributed among the constructors under proposals drawn up by Salomon Brothers, the US investment bank. The issue is understood to be far from settled, despite recent briefings given to City analysts by Salomon's suggesting that the final obstacles had been resolved.

Bernie Ecclestone, owner of the hugely profitable promotional empire, is understood to be locked in discussions with team bosses including Frank Williams and Ron Dennis, head of McLaren, with both sides apparently preferring to negotiate personally. The teams are demanding a much larger share in the floated company, which could be worth between £1.4bn and £2bn.

Mr Ecclestone's current plan is to offer half the shares to the public, retaining 30 per cent of the company for himself and leaving 10 per cent stakes for the teams and the sport's Paris-based governing body, the FIA. The teams are thought to be pushing to emerge with closer to 20 per cent of the business, leaving Mr Ecclestone with a similar-sized stake.

A source close to the discus-

sions said yesterday: "Ecclestone and Salomon's are using the media to negotiate. But behind the scenes things are far from concluded." The source added: "Frank Williams and Ron Dennis are in no hurry to sort this out. The one thing Bernie requires is their cooperation, but no one can understand why he is so keen to get the float away over the summer."

Another problem remains the allocation of earnings from world-wide television rights, which are under the sole control of Mr Ecclestone's business. Williams, McLaren and Tyrrell, were thought finally to have agreed to sign up to the Concorde Agreement which divides up the rights. However, several issues are understood to be outstanding which could be crucial to the success of the float. One suggestion is that teams may decide to share out individual stakes in Formula One using the same formula as Concorde, details of which are secret.

Salomon's had hoped to produce a prospectus on the float as early as this week, but it would be almost impossible to produce a document before negotiations are concluded. A spokeswoman for Formula One declined to comment on the talks.

The problems have come as Salomon's prepares to fly selected analysts to Barcelona this weekend for the Spanish Grand Prix. The visit has already raised eyebrows in the City because only analysts working for securities houses acting as sub-underwriters to the float have been invited.

Comment, page 25



Bubbling: Richard North, Bass's finance director (left) and Sir Ian Prosser, chairman. Bass announced half-year profits up 10 per cent yesterday

Decision on Bass deal soon

Sir Ian Prosser, chairman and chief executive of Bass, said yesterday that he expected a decision on the proposed £200m Carlsberg-Tetley acquisition to be announced by the competition authorities in mid-June.

The deal has been marooned with the Monopolies and Mergers Commission since last year.

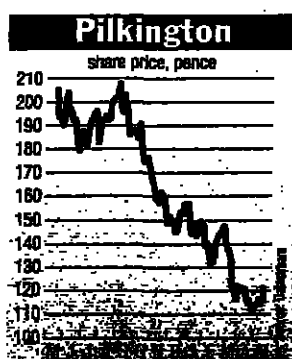
The comments came as the company announced a 10 per cent increase in half-year profits to £318m, boosted by strong performances in its Bass Taversham business and the Coral betting shops.

There was also renewed speculation yesterday that Bass might bid for William Hill, the Brent Walker-owned bookmakers, at a price of up to £700m. The company declined to comment.

Bass shares fell 22.5p to 798.5p on fears that it might over-pay as it seeks a deal. There were also concerns over a slowdown in the Holiday Inns hotels business.

Investment column, page 24

Pilkington ousts Leverton in bid to pick up pace



Magnus Grimmond

Sir Nigel Rudd, chairman of Pilkington, yesterday signalled a renewed determination to wield the axe at the struggling glass group by ousting the chief executive, Roger Leverton.

He is to be replaced by Paolo Scaroni, the Italian head of Pilkington's automotive products division, who has gained a reputation as a determined cost cutter. Signs that the board may be ready to take decisive action to

reverse the group's plunging share price in the face of two profit warnings over the past 12 months prompted a 6p rise in the shares to 121.5p yesterday.

Sir Nigel paid tribute to Mr Leverton's labours in reshaping Pilkington, which have seen some 8,000 jobs shed over the past four years as the group attempted to combat plummeting European glass prices.

"We have done quite a lot of restructuring but we felt the pace of change was not fast

enough in a very difficult industry," he said. "Roger has done a good job, but it is not good enough."

Mr Leverton, whose two-year contract paying £447,000 in 1995-96 could put him in line for a pay-off approaching £900,000, said he was disappointed that the efforts to refocus the business had not come through to shareholders. "Trading conditions have been extremely difficult in certain of our key markets and results have been

disappointing. The board felt that, under the circumstances, the next stage of the company's development should be handled by a new chief executive."

Mr Scaroni joined Pilkington in November from Techint, an Italian engineering group, where he was executive vice chairman.

Prior to that he was for 12 years with Saint Gobain, the French glass maker, ending up in charge of the group's worldwide flat glass activities.

A senior source in the company said the decision to replace Mr Leverton had been made by the non-executive directors, who had decided that the pace of change needed to be accelerated. Although there would not necessarily be more job losses, the intention was to undertake a new layering of management and costs.

The group yesterday confirmed its March warning that profits would be cut to £130m in 1996-97.

Celltech trial failure sends shares plummeting

Sameena Ahmad

The risks of gambling on biotechnology stocks were starkly illustrated yesterday after the share price of Celltech, the UK's second biggest company in the sector, crashed by almost half. The company's shares fell 28p to 34p as the group said its leading product, a drug for septic shock, had failed final stage clinical trials.

Celltech said the drug BAYX 1351, licensed from Germany's Bayer, "has not been shown to be effective in reducing mortality in septic shock". The

news rocked the biotechnology sector with shares in Scotia, PPL Therapeutics, Cortecs and Cantab falling heavily.

Peter Allen, Celltech's finance director, said the news was a severe disappointment. David Bloxham, chief operating officer, said ruefully: "When we got a phone call from Bayer yesterday morning and realised the news was not good we considered jumping off somewhere high."

However, Peter Feilner, chief executive, said that there were no financial implications for Celltech as Bayer had fully funded the drug's £100m de-

velopment costs. "We remain financially strong," he said.

Dr Bloxham said he thought the outcome was more devastating for Bayer, which had publicly heralded the drug as its main product launch in 1998 and had already built a factory to manufacture it. "I understand there will be redundancies at Bayer," he said.

Dr Bloxham said Celltech would abandon the septic work, but would continue developing the same drug for the bowel condition Crohn's disease and would continue its leukaemia and arthritis programmes. "We

still have other legs to stand on," he said.

Analysts said that though no one had been successful in developing a septic shock drug, the news was a blow for Celltech, particularly as the group was forced to abandon a drug for asthma less than two years ago. Ian Smith, an analyst with Lehman Brothers, said: "Celltech needs some new and exciting news to get its share price going again."

Mark Brewer, an analyst with Hoare Govett, pointed out that the septic shock market was notoriously difficult. "Every single biotechnology company who

has got involved in septic shock has failed," he said.

He thought Celltech's remaining drug programme looked weak: "We are positive about their leukaemia drug, but we think there will be a lot of competition in the Crohn's market and there are better products being developed for arthritis by companies like Glaxo."

Analysts said the impact of Celltech's announcement on other biotechnology stocks highlighted the risks involved in the sector. Mr Smith at Lehman said the market would now question how easy it was to

predict whether a drug would make it to market. "This will make the City less inclined to assume success," he said.

Mr Brewer at Hoare Govett thought it would have implications for the queue of biotech hopes to list in the UK. "Float prices may have to be scaled back," he said.

However, several prominent names in the industry argued that the sector as a whole would not be held back. John Padfield, chief executive at Chiroscience, said the market was increasingly able to discriminate between high and low-risk biotech stocks.

BAe seeks £160m aid for new plane

Michael Harrison

British Aerospace has approached the Government seeking up to £160m in launch aid to develop a stretched version of the Airbus A340 long-range jet. Rolls-Royce is also negotiating an aid package to build an engine for the new aircraft based on its Trent engine.

This emerged yesterday as the aerospace industry launched a campaign to persuade the Government to increase research and development funding for the sector fivefold to £100m a year.

Mike Turner, president of the Society of British Aerospace Companies and head of BAe's commercial aircraft business, said that together with launch aid the industry was looking for a total of £250m a year in government support.

BAe also intends to seek £250m in launch aid for the 600-seat super-jumbo planned by Airbus, the A3XX. The R&D programmes the industry is seeking increased funding for include a new wing design for the A3XX, advanced cockpit technology and a project aimed at reducing aircraft maintenance costs.




The industry will press its case at a meeting in the next few weeks with Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade. Mrs Beckett will also at-

tend the Paris Airshow next month, where ministers from the four nations - Britain, France, Germany and Spain - are expected to review progress towards turning the consortium into a commercial company and the request for further launch aid.

The A340-500/600 series will cost £2bn-£2.5bn to launch and will give Airbus a long-range 375 seat jet able to compete with Boeing's 747 jumbo and versions of the wide-bodied 777. Rolls is vying with the US engine manufacturer Pratt & Whitney to supply the engine for the new aircraft. A decision on which manufacturer has been chosen may be announced before Paris.

BAe received £400m in 1987 to develop the A330-A340 family of jets. It is due to start repaying that launch aid this autumn through a levy on sales and is pressing the Government to agree the new support package at the same time. Launch aid repayments will bring in £500m for the Government over the next five years.

Mr Turner said that if Britain did not increase its support for aerospace R&D then 40,000 of the 100,000 jobs the industry supports could disappear over the next 15 years as companies went overseas for funding.

STOCK MARKETS						
FTSE 100		Dow Jones*		Nikkei		
						
*FTSE 100 Index as of 27th June						
*Dow Jones Index as of 27th June						
*Nikkei Index as of 27th June						
Index	Close	Day's change	Change(%)	1996/97 High	1996/97 Low	Yield(%)
FTSE 100	4642.00	+34.50	+0.7	4683.90	4056.60	3.52
FTSE 250	4800.40	+11.40	+0.3	4729.40	4489.40	3.61
FTSE 350	2249.30	+14.50	+0.6	2272.10	2017.90	3.54
FT SmallCap	2301.57	-2.90	-0.1	2374.20	2178.29	3.05
FT All-Share	2204.21	+13.07	+0.6	2230.98	1989.78	3.50
New York*	7240.41	-83.05	-0.9	7333.55	5032.94	1.71
Tokyo	19841.98	-480.85	-2.4	20489.75	17305.85	0.81
Hong Kong	14295.52	-0.88	-0.0	14236.20	12055.17	3.01
Frankfurt	3596.09	+82.86	+1.5	3604.55	2848.77	1.51
Source: FT Information						

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling*		UK medium gilt		US long bond		Euro area		Japan	
Index	1 Month	1 Year	Index	1 Month	1 Year	Index	1 Month	1 Year	Index
UK	6.25	6.87	7.15	8.08	7.21	8.12	1.50	1.50	1.50
US	5.82	6.12	6.72	6.61	6.95	6.82	1.50	1.50	1.50
Japan	0.50	0.67	2.58	3.25	3.66	3.66	1.50	1.50	1.50
Germany	3.00	3.31	5.88	6.42	6.66	6.66	1.50	1.50	1.50

CURRENCIES									
£/\$				£/DM				£/¥	
Other York exchange rates and 90 Percent Yield at 1200 hours									
Pound									
	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago	Dollar					
\$ (London)	1.6457	+0.71c	1.5136	£ (London)	0.6078	-0.20	0.5807		
\$ (NY)	1.6465	-0.87c	1.5145	£ (NY)	0.6105	+0.69	0.5812		
DM (London)	2.7893	-0.80c	2.3331	DM (London)	1.6849	-1.23ct	1.5415		
¥ (London)	187.067	-3.31c	182.041	¥ (London)	113.670	-2.52	107.008		
¥ Index	99.0	-0.2	84.0	\$ Index	101.5	-1.6	97.2		
OTHER INDICATORS									
	Yesterday	Day's change	Year Ago	Index	Latest	Yr Ago	Next Figs		
90 Percent \$	20.11	-0.08	18.42	RPI	156.3+2.4pc	150.9	19 Jun		
Gold \$	342.85	+0.3	390.50	GDP	109.7+2.6pc	107.0	26 May		
Gold £	207.95	-0.2	257.99	Base Rates	- 8.25pc	6.75	-		

OTHER INDICATORS									
Oil Brent \$		RPI		150.4+2.4pc		150.9		19 Jun	
Index	Yesterday	Day's change	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday	Day's change	Year Ago	Index	Yesterday
Oil Brent \$	20.11	-0.08	18.42	RPI	150.4	+2.4pc	150.9	19 Jun	150.9
Gold \$	342.85	+0.3	390.50	GDP	109.7	+2.6pc	107.0	25 May	107.0
Gold £	207.95	-0.2	257.99	Base Rates	-0.25pc	6.75	-	-	-

Gambles pay off at Land Securities

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

Land Securities: at a glance

Market value: £4.52bn, share price: 873.5p

Five-year record

Pre-tax profits (£m)

Dividends per share (pence)

Yield on underlying portfolio

Share price

Yield on underlying portfolio

Share price

Yield on underlying portfolio

Share price

Yield on underlying portfolio

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more Harvest Inns, while the Fork & Pitcher outlets have been renamed Vintage Inns to suit its older audience better.

In branded drinks, Hooper's Hooc continues to dominate the alecopol market with a 60 per cent share, though sales growth has slowed to 16 per cent on last year. On full-year forecasts of £728m, the shares trade on a forward rating of 15 falling to 14. Hold.

Courtaulds leaves troubles behind

Courtaulds' shares have been under a cloud of late, hit by concerns about the pound and other matters. But yesterday the market was in the mood to be a little more charitable, marking the shares up 24.5p to 330.5p. The problems of two years ago, when the price of key raw materials like wood pulp and acrylonitrile soared, are now well and truly in the past.

The other local difficulties have been well flagged. The seemingly ever-present problems with currency are well known, while Courtaulds signalled that it was having problems with overcapacity in the viscose market when it announced plans to cut 20 per cent of its European production in February.

So while the 2 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £134m in the year to March looked modest, part of the performance was masked by a £14m contribution last time from discontinued operations like Amico floors and the cellophane business. There was plenty to be hopeful about in the underlying group.

Tencel, the new fibre on which Courtaulds has lavished £400m so far, including £60m last year, has at last broken into profit. The group is coy about how profitable it is, but David Ingles at James Capel reckons it could have chipped in £14m on just under £100m sales last year. That augurs well for the third production line due on stream in Grimsby later this year and the next Tencel plant, due to be built in Korea, Indonesia or Singapore.

Meanwhile, the group's long-term plan to build sales of other products in the Far East is also starting to pay off, with a 45 per cent jump in profits to £16m from the area. Worldwide coatings and sealants, still by far the biggest product division, is suffering from the cheaper dollar on translation, but Courtaulds' strong position in niche areas like solvent-free powder coatings and aircraft sealants is reaping good underlying growth.

Viscose remains the dog of the portfolio, producing a small loss last year. It will not show real improvement until the industry cuts more capacity.

But assuming Capel's forecast of £150m is realised this year, the shares, on a forward p/e of 14, look reasonable value.

Sketchley director set to quit after accounting fiasco

Sameena Ahmed

Sketchley last night looked set to part company with Richard Meyers, finance director, after the dry cleaning to road cut group announced its second profits warning in just over a year.

Joe Jackson, chief executive, said in a statement yesterday that "certain accounting deficiencies" uncovered by outside auditors during preparation of the company's results would mean a "moderate" loss for the year. Analysts who had pencilled in an £8m profit for the year to March now expect a loss of between £1m and £4m.

Sketchley was due to present its final results next Tuesday when it was also going to announce a change of name. Shares in the group plummeted 26 per cent to 65p.

A source close to the company said that, as Sketchley was without a retail division manager, Mr Meyers would have to take responsibility for the accounting fiasco. "That business needed more surgery and was gripped directly from the top," said the source.

Mr Meyers could leave as early as today. He has been with

Sketchley for 11 years and received a basic salary of £109,000 last year. He is on a one-year rolling contract. It is not known whether he will receive compensation.

Analysts said that though there were no suggestions of impropriety, the timing of yesterday's announcement was remarkable.

"I do think it's very odd that a week before the chief executive is due to announce his company's results, he doesn't know if he will make an £8m profit or a £4m loss. It stretches the imagination," said one. Another said: "This is just one more nail in their coffin - another sorry episode in a sorry 15 years."

Sketchley has been criticised for the slow recovery of its dry cleaning shops and diversification into dry laying with the acquisition of ARM this February.

Sketchley's statement said the accounting problems were limited to its group's retail division, a third of its total business, which incorporates dry cleaning shops and photo-processing outlets.

Sketchley said the retail division would make a second-half loss "in excess of the profit gen-

erated by that division in the first half". Analysts estimated the retail division made £3m profits in that period. It said there would be a further provision relating to the reorganisation of the retail side against future vacancies by the group and subject to third parties.

Though details were sketchy and the company was not returning calls, the two areas of concern appear to be provisions for shop disposals and creditor and stock accounting.

Sketchley appears not to have written down the value of its stock adequately which could cost up to £3m. Moreover the group may now have to double the £7.5m provision it made last year for closing or letting 150 shops. Early suggestions are that the group may let out some of these shops for less than its own costs, changing the difference each year to expenses. However the auditors are thought to have asked the group to make another one-off provision of £7m.

Analysts said that though these were mainly non-cash adjustments, the effect would reduce Sketchley's shareholders' funds, taking gearing to over 100 per cent.

Carlton may go to DTN

Cathy Newman

Carlton yesterday gave a strong hint that it was prepared to switch camps to ensure that it had a significant role in digital broadcasting should the British Digital Broadcasting consortium be set up. It is backing that to win a licence next month.

The company indicated that if its consortium lost the battle for a digital terrestrial TV licence then it would consider offering programming to the rival bidder, Digital Television Network.

Carlton said that not only would it be involved in digital through ITV, but also "as a major producer and distributor of television programmes and films".

City analysts said yesterday they had anticipated Carlton's alternative plans, expecting the company to exploit its programming and production expertise. One analyst said: "If Carlton aren't successful with BDB, you'd expect them to go round the back door and negotiate with DTN."

Robert Jolliffe, media analyst at ABN Amro Hoare Govett, said the digital television environment was "generally incredibly good news for Carlton".

He said: "Digital television will mean that there are more buyers of the kind of programming that Carlton produces - high-quality UK drama."

Carlton's shares jumped 18.5p to 517.5p after it an-

nounced pre-tax profits up 11 per cent to £158.0m for the six months to the end of March. The results were roughly in line with expectation, but some analysts were reserving judgement on the full year until the results of the digital licence awards were known.

Carlton's television advertising revenues rose 11 per cent in the half-year. However, some analysts predicted that growth may not be so strong for the full year as the election had a negative impact on advertising revenues.

Three of Carlton's four divisions continued to grow, but the video operation reported a 12 per cent drop in turnover, in part due to the strength of sterling.

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Signet shake-up leaves ordinary shareholders with 17.5% stake

Nigel Cope

City Correspondent

Signet, the former Rainer's jewellery business, announced its long-awaited capital restructuring yesterday in a shake-up that will leave existing ordinary shareholders with just 17.5 per cent of the company.

Signet said the capital reorganisation would reduce interest charges, improve liquidity and enable it to pay dividends on future profits. The H Samuel and Ernest Jones retailer has not paid a dividend since 1992 and does not expect to pay one in the current year. Signet's ordinary shares fell 6p to 30.5p.

The rebel shareholder Julian Tregler, of UK

Ecclestone's Formula One win is not in the bag

COMMENT

Even if he proves himself as sprightly as Jacques Villeneuve between now and Silverstone, it is hard to see how he can meet his timetable.

The flotation of Bernie Ecclestone's Formula One may not be quite as close to the starting grid as his financial advisers Salomon Brothers and his fans in the sport and the Press have been telling everyone.

The City had been led to believe that all final obstacles to the float had been overcome. Mr Ecclestone had patched up his row with the leading Grand Prix teams, they had settled for a 10 per cent stake in the quoted company and there was even talk of a prospectus being published by the end of this week. In all, we were told, the flotation would reach the chequered flag by the time of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone in July.

All this is news, it now transpires, to the likes of Williams and McLaren, who have led the rearguard action to stop Mr Ecclestone cashing in his chips without a fairer distribution of spoils to those who actually make this particular merry-go-round rotate - the racing teams themselves.

It now appears that they are holding out for a stake of nearer 20 per cent and still haggling over the details of the Concorde Agreement, which governs how the television revenues are shared out. Some of this may be just bravado, but that doesn't make it any less of a threat to the float.

Even if Mr Ecclestone proves himself as sprightly as Jacques Villeneuve between now and Silverstone, it is hard to see how he can meet his timetable. How could he publish a prospectus - other than one with a health warning on every page - without

the agreement of the most important names in the sport?

Mind you, he is doing his best to stifle dissent in the City. It will, by all accounts, be difficult to move at this weekend's Spanish Grand Prix without bumping into an analyst or fund manager there at Formula One's expense. In time-honoured fashion, the sub-underwriting of the offer is being distributed as widely as possible. The same tactics were employed by BSKyB and the water and electricity companies to ensure that their flotations were greeted with maximum enthusiasm in the broking community.

Mr Ecclestone could call the constructors' bluff and press ahead regardless. But could he really float without the likes of Villeneuve, Prenzler, Coulthard and Hakkinen in tow? The constructors' ultimate weapon is to withdraw their teams. Mr Ecclestone is familiar with such tactics. It is what he did at the Spanish Grand Prix in 1982 after falling out with the powers that then ran the sport. So he should know better than most that playing hard ball usually works.

The Bank is better off without this task

First impressions are usually the most lasting, but the more considered second view is often the more reliable. So after the rave first-night reviews of Gordon Brown's latest City drama, *Death on Throgmorton St.*, is

there any cause now for a little revisionism. Well actually not very much seems to be the answer.

Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, is plainly more upset about the whole thing than we were led to believe on the first night. He still worries about whether this is the right thing to do and is understandably peeved about not being consulted on the speed of it all. If he had been told two weeks ago when operational independence was announced that the quid pro quo was losing supervision, all well and good. But he wasn't. The Chancellor said that reform of City regulation was a longer-term goal after a period of debate and due consultation. Then all of a sudden it becomes immediate. Is Mr George right to be concerned, or is this just pique at being stripped of half his empire?

There is a quite respectable case for arguing that, far from strengthening City regulation, the reforms will actually only lessen the Bank's authority and lead to an inferior form of banking supervision. There is a real danger, moreover, of the SIB evolving into an overly bureaucratic and authoritarian regulatory monster. That would clearly be a very bad thing for the City, significantly undermining its present attractions to international capital and banking. The function of good regulation, it is often said, is to keep the horses under control while not in any way interfering in the race. Certainly the traditionally "light" touch of City regulators has

been as much a part of the Square Mile's success as its failings.

Central to this approach is the way the Bank of England exerts informal authority in the City through its supervisory arm. While this may be a peculiarly British way which leaves much to be desired, it none the less seems to work. Remove the Governor's eyes, so to speak, and his eyebrows won't work any more either.

Despite these risks, however, there is every reason to believe that the Bank will actually function rather better stripped of its supervisory role, and that's not just in the conduct of monetary policy.

Shorn of supervision, the Bank can devote all its energies to policy, knowing that it is not going to be diverted every five years or so by some massive banking scandal. Furthermore, the Bank will still retain overall responsibility for financial stability, so that when there is a crisis it will be taking up the reins in dealing with it. In other words it keeps the interesting bits while getting shot of the liability of the donkey work. Just think of it. Next time there's a banking collapse it won't be possible to blame the Bank. Instead the Bank will come waltzing in with the words: "Here's another fine mess the SIB has left us to sort out". Don't knock it Mr George. This seems like a pretty good deal for the Bank.

Less clear is whether the reforms will actually improve the system of supervision. Making sure that they do, and that City reg-

ulation continues to be operated in the interests of practitioners as well as consumers, is one for the process of public consultation.

Pilkington chief departs on schedule

The departure of the urbane Roger Leverton as chief executive of Pilkington is one of those stories that seemed so utterly predictable that it becomes hard to register it as a story at all. The writing was on the wall as far back as November last year when the share price first dipped back through the level of the 1995 rights issue. His exit became pretty much inevitable with March's profits warning.

As it happens, the dreadful underperformance of the Pilkington share price is not all down to Mr Leverton. He's been operating in an appalling market place. The price of glass has been falling like a stone for the best part of two years now and the European authorities have meanwhile proved resistant to any co-ordinated approach to dealing with the industry's chronic over-capacity problem.

Even so, when a company is in a fix more can always be done. Mr Leverton plainly wasn't doing it, so Sir Nigel Rudd, chairman of three years standing, felt justified in taking action. Sir Nigel will have to pray that the new man, a vicious cost-cutter out of the same mould as Sir Nigel himself, can do better. Otherwise Sir Nigel too might find himself walking the plank.

Railtrack faces fines if it reneges on spending plans

Randeep Ramesh
Transport Correspondent

Railtrack, the privatised owner of Britain's track, signalling and stations, will face stiff fines if the company fails to deliver on its £16bn spending plans. John Swift QC, the rail regulator, said yesterday that he was seeking to extend his powers to ensure that Railtrack met its targets, adding that the company's delivery against its plans to date had been "disappointing".

The move was seen by many industry observers as the first of a series of measures under the new Labour administration designed to increase customer confidence in industries privatised by previous Conservative governments.

Prime Minister Tony Blair yesterday pledged changes to the regulatory system governing bus services, saying there were "severe problems" in the regu-

latory system and there would be changes made to it.

But while the Government contemplates further legislation for buses, the slow pace of investment by Railtrack has forced Mr Swift to act. He said: "There remains a substantial backlog of expenditure on network assets, stations and depots which Railtrack must eradicate as a priority."

With all the train companies' subsidies fixed under the franchising process, Mr Swift is quick to point out that "most of [Railtrack's] annual expenditure is funded by the state". More than £2bn of public money will be poured into Railtrack this year accounting for more than 85 per cent of its turnover. "Assurances that the capital and maintenance programme will be carried out require something more bankable than the expression of intentions," he said. The regulator's announce-

ment came just a day after Railtrack outlined a £1bn plan to upgrade the nation's stations under its network management strategy. He praised the vision presented by the company. "We have to accept that the spending is far better than it was when Railtrack was in the public sector," said Mr Swift.

Railtrack claimed it was too early to comment on the announcement in detail, despite being kept fully informed by the regulator's office of the policy since the middle of March.

There is little the company can do to stop the regulator from obtaining new powers. It could seek a Monopolies and Mergers Commission reference, and would then have to prove the regulator was acting against the public interest. Even if the MMC were to agree, the regulator only has to take into account the commission's view and could press ahead regardless.

Lockheed to pay MoD over delays

The Ministry of Defence is to receive substantial compensation payments from Lockheed Martin, the US defence contractor, over delays to the delivery of replacement Hercules Transport aircraft, writes Chris Godsmark.

The first of 25 planes from the £1bn contract should have been handed over to the RAF last November, but Lockheed warned yesterday that it still could not give a firm delivery date. The aircraft are now unlikely to enter service until 1998. Lockheed is to hold talks with MoD officials next month to discuss compensation.

Bill Bullock, president of Lockheed Martin Aeronautical systems, blamed the delays partly on the certification process with the US regulator. The penalties are thought likely to run into millions of dollars.

Lockheed revealed yesterday that UK aerospace companies had won almost \$500m (£313m) of orders from the Hercules contract, of which more than \$300m had been confirmed last year. Dowty, part of the TI group and GKN's Westland arm have both received substantial orders.

National Power joins tax revolt

Michael Harrison

National Power yesterday launched its campaign to be excluded from the windfall tax, arguing that since privatisation the company had raised nearly £7bn for the taxpayer, more than twice the amount shareholders had received. However, the generator declined to follow the lead of British Telecom and the airports operator BAA by threatening legal action against the Government if it was included in the levy.

Keith Henry, National Power's chief executive, said: "A legal challenge is not high on our agenda. We feel it extremely unlikely that the Government would do anything illegal."

The company said it should be excluded from the tax because it was not a price-regulated monopoly, had not made excess profits and operated in a competitive market with an increasing proportion of revenue earned overseas.

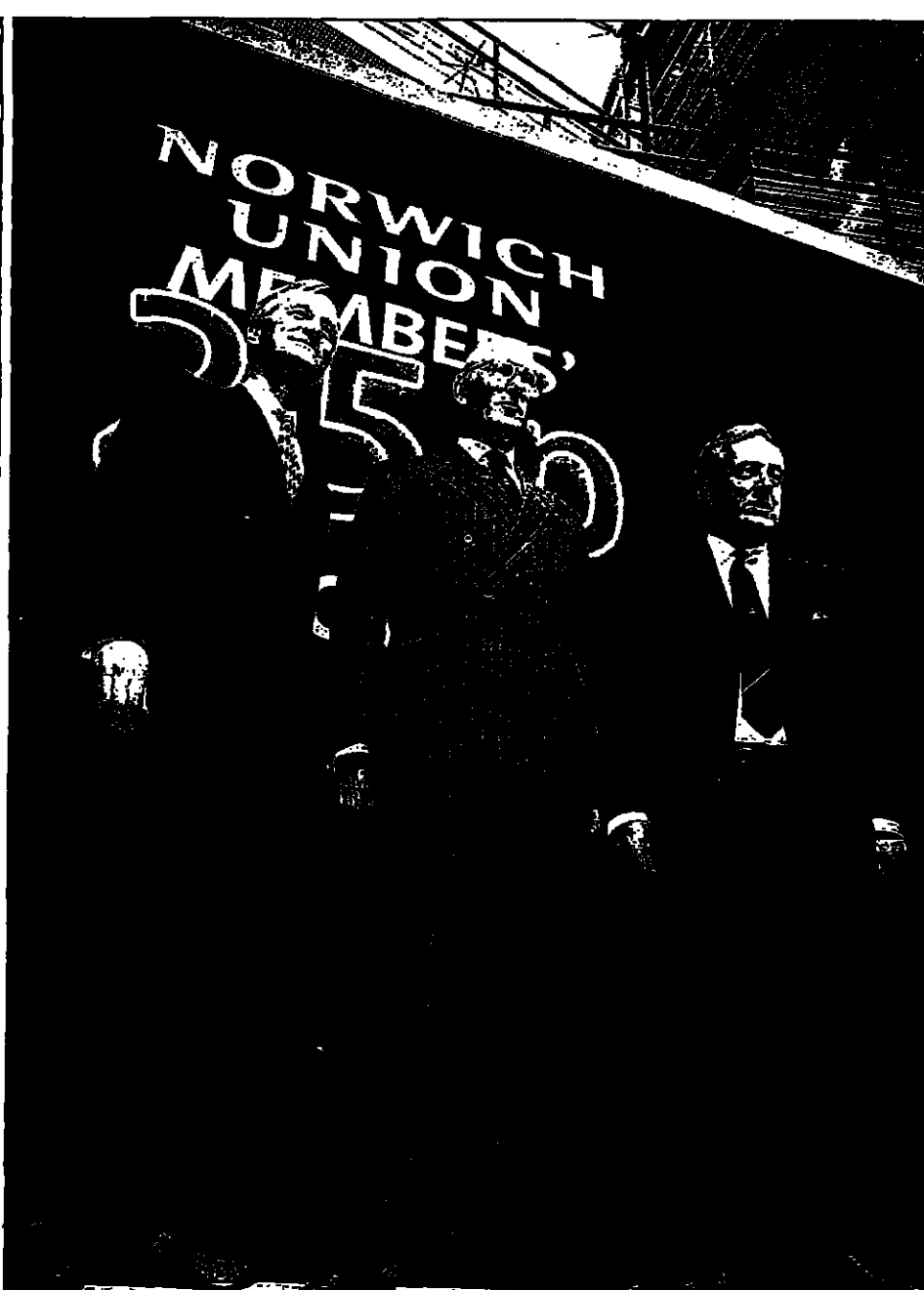
Mr Henry also argued that the taxpayer had enjoyed a windfall gain from the privatisation of National Power because of the way the Government had sold it in two stages.

According to an analysis sent to the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, by the company, gains for the taxpayer from the sale of National Power totalled £6.825bn to March 1996. This figure included £3.86bn in net proceeds, £265m of dividends on the 40 per cent discount, and £2.1bn in corporation tax, VAT and National Insurance contributions.

Against that, the company said that shareholders benefited by £2.86bn over the same period through dividends and the increase in market value. The figure does not include the £1.2bn special dividend National Power paid last year.

National Power yesterday reported an 8 per cent fall in pre-tax profits last year to £740m as its UK market share shrank from 32 per cent to 24 per cent and wholesale electricity prices fell 4 per cent.

The company forecast a further drop in market share this year to as little as 20 per cent as competition from independent generators increased. UK operating profits fell by £70m last year to £783m, but this was offset by an increase in overseas profits from £15m to £74m.



Sharing it out: (from left) Richard Harvey, NU's chief executive elect, George Paul, chairman, and Allan Bridgewater, the current chief executive. Photograph: Emma Boam

Norwich members offered further shares at a discount

Nic Cicutt

Almost three million members of Norwich Union, the UK mutual insurer seeking a stock market flotation, will be able to buy further shares at a 10 per cent discount, it was announced yesterday.

Members will pay 25p a share less than the strike price for the £2.4bn offer, which is to be fixed in an institutional book-building exercise.

Norwich Union said it was setting aside shares worth an estimated £800m especially for members. A further £400m will be clawed back from institutions if, as expected, demand from members is high enough.

Part of the total sale includes £670m of shares which are to be sold for the benefit of members living in the United States and a number of other countries

where it is legally difficult to allocate free shares.

The company estimates the public offer price of its shares will be in the range of 240p to 290p, with members offered the discount on a minimum further investment of £400.

Other retail investors will have to buy at least £1,000 of shares. All members have already been allocated a minimum of 150 free shares, with a typical windfall of between £800 and £1,000.

George Paul, NU chairman, said: "We are keen to encourage members to continue to participate in the future of the group. I hope that they will take advantage of this opportunity to buy further shares."

Alan Richards, a director at First Marathon, the corporate finance house, said: "The price of the shares will depend on the book-building exercise. But I

would be surprised if the price wasn't at the top of the range and the discount is attractive. Financial services shares have done very well recently, although shares are quite frothy."

Mini-prospectuses and application forms are to be sent to members now, with 10 June set as the deadline for receipt of applications.

The company said it expected its market capitalisation to be up to £5.6bn. Of this, some £3bn will be issued in the form of free shares to members, with the rest sold off in an international offer. Senior management set out on a roadshow yesterday to sell their story to investors.

Richard Harvey, group chief executive elect, said the average free share distribution will be in the range of £1,524 to £1,840, with 43 per cent receiving the 300 share minimum, worth over £720.

IN BRIEF

Old Interflora board warns of legal action

Lawyers acting for the ousted board of directors of Interflora have warned they will begin legal proceedings against the rebel board on Monday if the new directors continue to refuse to hold a postal ballot of the organisation's full membership over the row. The new board, appointed at a mass meeting of Interflora members less than a fortnight ago, was still meeting yesterday to consider its own legal advice on the issue.

The original 11-strong board, led by chairman David Parry, argues the 1,000 members at the mass meeting were not representative of the full 2,600 membership. The old board's solicitors have written to lawyers acting for the rebels insisting that a ballot must be announced by Sunday. They said Interflora's articles of association specifically stated that a ballot must be called if supported by more than 10 per cent of members.

C&W wins Panama telephone bid

Cable & Wireless has won its bid to share in the privatisation of the Panama telephone network. C&W's £408m offer was chosen after international competition, giving the group 49 per cent of shares in the company Instituto Nacional de Telecomunicaciones (Intel). The company was attractive because of its high growth potential, with just 12 per cent of households in Panama currently connected to the network. Intel made profits of \$153m last year on revenues of \$246m.

TUC moves into domestic energy market

The Trades Union Congress announced a push into the domestic energy market as competition for electricity and gas gets under way next year. Union Energy, launched yesterday, will market to union members initially, offering discounts over the incumbent suppliers. However the company warned it would not match some of the "suicidal" price cuts seen in trials of domestic gas competition in the South of England. Union Energy is in talks with several potential partners, including regional power groups, which will be responsible for providing the fuel.

US exports reach record \$76.5bn

Record exports shrank the US deficit on trade in goods and services by \$2bn (£1.2bn) to \$8.51bn in March. Total exports increased by 4.1 per cent during the month to a record \$76.48bn thanks to strong demand for aircraft, capital goods such as telecommunications equipment and consumer goods. Imports grew by a more modest 1.2 per cent to \$84.99bn, which was also a record. The value of imports of cars and parts declined. There was a sharp improvement in the monthly deficit with China. The bilateral gap narrowed from \$3.34bn in February to \$2.59bn in March, the lowest since the \$2.3bn recorded in April last year. But the deficit with Japan expanded to \$4.61bn in March, an 8.3 per cent increase from the previous month's \$4.26bn gap.

Pillar Property buys Fort Retail Park

Wilson Bowden is selling Fort Retail Park, its 128,000 square feet retail warehouse development in Edinburgh, to Pillar Property Investments for £41.8m. Construction of the park was scheduled for completion later this year and would comprise fashion retail warehouse accommodation in 12 units, the majority of which had already been pre-let, it said.

Operating margins down at Bowthorpe

Investors at Bowthorpe's annual general meeting were told that the company's operating margins had been declining. Anthony Vice, chairman, said: "So far this year sales and orders have shown modest underlying growth but weaker markets, especially in Europe, have led to a decline in operating margins, although we have seen some recovery during April." He said the strength of sterling, particularly against European currencies, had continued to impact profits through translation. "Management figures indicate that the translation cost so far this year, in terms of pre-tax profits, has been running at an annual rate of £7m-£8m."

OFT investigates Canadian gas company

The Office of Fair Trading is investigating the activities of a Canadian company which is offering gas customers in the North-west guaranteed reductions in their bills in return for paying a one-off fee. An OFT spokesman confirmed a report in the magazine *Utility Week* that it had launched an inquiry after receiving complaints about Atlantic Gas Alliance. In return for a fee of £30 AGA promises to secure gas at a lower price than that offered by rival suppliers to British Gas. *Utility Week* said the local gas consumers council had branded the scheme "a waste of mon-

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market report / shares

Norwich is no help as funds rush to buy financials

Data Bank

FTSE 100	4642.0	+34.5
FTSE 250	4500.4	+11.4
FTSE 350	2249.3	+14.3
SEAO VOLUME	812.6m	
49.86		
Gifts Index	96.62	

Share spotlight



The Norwich Union discount could put further pressure on City institutions striving to adjust their portfolios to the new financial climate.

The insurer's members-come-shareholders will be offered up to half the shares available in the group's flotation. The stock market took the view that the cut-price offer was sufficiently generous to encourage Norwich members to take up extra shares, thereby reducing the amount available for outside investors, particularly institutions.

The flotation of Norwich and a host of building societies has thrown the normally carefully structured weightings of many funds into disarray.

Hence the institutional rush to buy financial shares to try and keep their ratios intact. "Norwich has offered fund managers little comfort", said one market man.

The price range was lifted

from 220p to 265p in March to 240p to 290p. Members get a 25p a share discount.

The Norwich arrival, just after Chancellor Gordon Brown is due to deliver his first Budget, is on present form, seen as a surefire success, with the shares expected to move comfortably above 300p. But Mr Brown could upset the Norwich apple cart if his measures put the market into retreat.

Legal & General was the most obvious beneficiary of the Norwich terms, gaining 20.5p to 455.5p. Others up in sympathy included GRE and General Accident.

Many observers believe Norwich, despite a capitalisation of up to £5.6bn, could quickly find itself involved in takeover action. The soon-to-be-quoted Halifax is one possible bidder. But Norwich may not stand still to await its predicted fate. It may well decide to strike the first blow.

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year

Footsie climbed 34.5 points to 4,642, reflecting relief over the no-change US interest rate decision. At one time the index was up 46.3.

The biotechies had a shocking time. Celltech fell out of its prime after Bayer decided to abandon a septic shock drug developed with Celltech. The German giant had made positive noises about the treatment in the past few weeks.

Celltech tumbled 28p to 341p. Scotia 10p to 392.5p and Biocompare 10p to 133p. Cantab Pharmaceuticals gave up 47.5p to 917.5p.

Bluebird, the toys group, was another major casualty, slump-

ing 63p to 106.5p as it warned about profits. The shares touched 385p 18 months ago. Sketchley, off 23p to 65p, Drings of Bath (1p to 2p) and Combs Consulting (12p to 35.5p) were others inflicting trading gloom on their shareholders.

Land Securities, up 29.5p to 873.5p, led properties higher as it reported a 13.3 per cent NAV increase. British Land added 28p to 588.5p and Briton Estates 11.5p to 210p.

Cadbury Schweppes, weak lately, rose 16p to 541.5p following analyst meetings and Merrill Lynch offered a gentle nudge to Railtrack, up 8.5p to

440p. Engineer Cobham rose 5p to 643.5p following the Henderson Crosthwaite investment dinner.

Pilkington's new chief executive lifted the shares 6p to 121.5p with the warrants 3.5p higher at 17p.

An encouraging trading statement from Arjo Wiggins Appleton helped the hard-pressed packaging and paper sector. Arjo put on 6.5p to 174p and Resman 7p to 283p.

Publisher Adscene held at 149.5p; its decision not to sell its commercial printing arm is seen as supporting takeover speculation.

The day's newcomer, the Eagles rugby club, was kicked into touch, trading at 33.5p against a 40p placing.

Airtours continued its up-and-away performance, rising 12p to 1,013.5p on the summer holiday boom and speculation that the US cruising group, Carnival, could mount a bid.

Aminex, the oil group where the World Bank and Russian investors have substantial shareholdings, rose 11.5p to 85p, a new high, after disclosing its long-awaited Russian deal. It has agreed to develop, in partnership with local interests, oilfields in Tatarstan, a Russian republic, which has sizeable reserves. Aminex, run by Brian Hall, already has substantial interests in the former Soviet Union. Last year it lost \$955,000 against \$2.4m in the previous year.

Peterhead, a crane and forklift truck group born out of the old World Fluids shell, rose 3p to 69.5p after reporting a £714,000 first-quarter profit and the £500,000 acquisition of a Humber-based crane company. Although operating in England and Scotland, Peterhead's shares remain on the Dublin market.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 50 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Source: FT Information

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FTSE 100 - Real-time	00	Starting Rates	04	Privatisation Issues	38
UK Stock Market Report	01	Bullion Report	05	Water Shares	39
UK Company News	02	Wall St Report	06	Electricity Shares	40
Foreign Exchange	03	Tokyo Market	07	High Street Banks	41

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Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000
British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000
British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000
British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000	British Steel	200,000

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Open 4638.9 up 33	11.00 4631.3 up 32.8	14.00 4647.1 up 39.6
09.00 4622.5 up 14.8	12.00 4638.7 up 32.2	15.00 4653.4 up 45.9
10.00 4635.2 up 27.7	13.00 4644.8 up 37.3	16.00 4644.4 up 36.9
		Close 4642.0 up 34.5

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Investment Prices

High Low Stock Price Chg Yld P/E Ratio

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Investment Prices

PEOPLE & BUSINESS



search published recently by the International Monetary Fund.¹ It shows that a loss of employment is created when the monetary authorities have to engineer a recession to reduce inflation when the economy overheats. This exceeds the unemployment that remains if the economy is prevented from growing enough to reach the "non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment" or *Nairu*.

In other words, it makes sense not to squeeze unemployment absolutely low if it costs without triggering inflation because the costs of going too far are so high. In the words of the authors: "There can be significant gains from preventing an overheating of the economy." There is an asymmetry in the

There is new evidence for the benefits of running a cautious and stable macroeconomic policy in re-

there are good theoretical reasons and empirical evidence for regarding it as a convex curve, where the rise in unemployment needed to reduce inflation by 1 percentage point is bigger than the fall in unemployment achieved by letting in-

At long last, interest rate policy is in the hands of a steady, middle-aged driver with his foot touching the brake, his eyes on the amber light and nothing to distract him. As long as they go ahead as billed, Mr Brown's reforms will yield lower inflation, lower interest rates and lower unemployment for years to come. The Chancellor has decided that the classic British hand-brake turns are not for him. Thank goodness the Bank of England is not keen on them either.

In fact it was NCR pretend money. Seeing this, our Bill declared: "Ah well, I guess I've got enough money in any case," to much syncopantic laughter.



They're a pedantic lot at the Epsom RAC Club. Robert Fenner of City law firm Fenners enjoys spending Sundays at the club, playing tennis and golf and taking tea with his wife.

When Mr Stewart arrived for the Monaco Grand Prix he found no space for his motorhome in the team compound and was allocated an inconvenient space away from the other teams near the Royal Palace. When Mr Stewart complained to Mr Ecclestone, back came the response: "You always said you wanted to be near the Royals, so now's your chance."

John Willcock

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£ Buys		£ Buys		£ Buys	
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Australia (Schillings)	19.0500	Germany (Marks)	2.7060	Norway (Kronar)	11.3000

Brent Crude		Gas oil	WTI	Products †					
IPE 5.30pm	(\$/barrel)	IPE close		8pm	Spot CIF NW Europe				
	*chg Yr ago	*chg							
Jul	19.67	-0.36	Jun	176.25	-1.50	Jun	21.50	Mar/Unleaded	215/219
Aug	19.92	-0.36	Jul	177.60	-0.25	Aug	21.60	Mombasa	183/182

Agricultural				CMS
Cocoa	Coffee	Barley	Potatoes	Potatoes
1977-78	1977-78	1977-78	1977-78	1977-78

Aug	576.75	May	1240	July	97.50	May	283.50-288.50	289.50
Oct	308.20	Jun	1285	Jul	88.50	Jul	284.75-289.50	290.75
Dec	308.00	Vol:	1198	Sep	91.25	Sep	288.25-295.25	295.50
Vol	602	Index	1283	Vol:	961			

Other Softs

Apr/May	Copra (Y)	anyone	132.0	May/Jun	Cocinar US	1/3 none	555.0
	Cotton (NY)	UScent/ib	72.37	Oct/Dec	Sindur Oil	Sh/none	575.0
unq	Wool	Acnt/kg	unq	Aug/Oct	Repressed OIL	100kg	100.0
Jun	Rubber*	Mcnt/kg	279.5	May/Jun	Groundnut O	Sh/none	895.0

Origin: S=SouthEC = east origin; * = Philippines/Indonesia *Malaysia ** = Europe Source: FT Information/Reuters

[illegible]

sport

What we have now is a crisis of vested interest, a bundle of new money but no clear idea of how to spend it sensibly

If there is one thing to be learned from the past Premier League season it is that very few home-bred footballers can hold their own with the best imported talent. It was mostly foreigners who stopped the show - Gianfranco Zola, Juninho, Dennis Bergkamp, Patrick Vieira, Eric Cantona, Roberto Di Matteo, Peter Schmeichel and, when the mood took him, Faustino Asprilla - who provided the liveliest entertainment.

You can go as far as to say that of the players available to the England coach, Glenn Hoddle, only Alan Shearer and Tony Adams are entitled to be confident of election for a properly assembled Premier League representative XI. Roy Keane would get a nod, perhaps, Ryan Giggs, but being Irish and Welsh respectively,

they do not come into Hoddle's consideration either.

Take last week's FA Cup final between Chelsea and Middlesbrough: players from all sorts of places and not one full England international. No wonder that the Football Association's first technical director, Howard Wilkinson, is pressing for a development structure because as things stand there is unlikely to be much of an improvement.

For example, according to a number of managers in the Premier League there is not much point in casting closer to home: little coming through, transfer fees out of all proportion to ability, the flow of talent from Scotland long since dried up. "We don't look there anymore," I was told last week.

Another piece of information suggests a further influx of overseas players. It is that all but the most important performers in Italian football can now be purchased. "It was astonishing to hear some of the names that were mentioned," said the Leeds manager, George Graham.

The inherited problems of Thomas Brodin and Tony Yeboah did not deter Graham from making an extensive tour of European football last season. "Even when you allow for the foreigners who haven't done much here there is better value for money overseas," he said. "With the Bosman thing hanging over them even the wealthiest clubs are looking to cash in on the money that is flowing into the Premier League and it won't surprise me if more big



KEN JONES

names are here before the start of next season.

It seems that Manchester United will enter the transfer market in a big way following Eric Cantona's unexpected retirement. Alex Ferguson's keen eyes are not only on Juninho but

the Croat attacker, Alen Boksic, for whom he made a move last summer before Juventus stepped in.

You can go on and on like this. More imported players, fresh proof that Wilkinson's blueprint for the future was long overdue. Trouble is that a tradition of fragmented government stands in the way of progress. And having made their own investments, how many clubs are prepared to address the problem on a national basis? Wilkinson's blueprint deserves serious consideration but there have been blueprints before that did not lead to anything. Following one of England's many World Cup disappointments the FA brought together a number of luminaries, including Matt Busby and Joe Mercer, but the

ideas they put forward died on the vine.

What we have now, I think, is a crisis of vested interest, a bundle of new money but no clear idea of how to spend it sensibly. "Salaries have gone through the roof but I don't blame the players for getting all they can," one manager said to me last week at the Football of the Year dinner. "I blame the people who agree their contracts. One of my players asked for £750,000 a year to renew his contract. I told him that he might as well ask for a million because he's not getting it. And what about all these guys who are making a huge profit on their investment in English football?"

I don't know where all this will lead but unless English football responds to the dangers implied by

Wilkinson's report the roof could come tumbling in.

At a recent coaching conference Wilkinson was told that there are 10 full-sized covered football fields in Finland. A climatic necessity perhaps but nevertheless an impressive aid to development. Terry Venables has been shown marvellous facilities in Australia. "The people who took me around assumed automatically that we have similar advantages. It would have been embarrassing to put them right so I put on my best smile and nodded," he said.

As for a team from the Premier League who could argue against Schmeichel, Bjornneby, Adams, Leboeuf, Petrescu, Keane, Di Matteo, Juninho, Zola, Bergkamp and Shearer. Just two Englishmen.

Bowlers to the rescue for Kent

Cricket

DAVID LLEWELLYN
reports from Horsham
Kent 245
Sussex 102-4

The remains of a giant oak tree tower over the scoreboard on the Barrack Field side of this picturesque ground. It died four years ago, but the club was prohibited from taking it down because it was said to be harbouring bats, which are protected under law.

Subsequent investigation established that no bats had ever existed there; and that is rather like Kent have been this season. Claims that they have batsmen have proved illusory. They had compiled a paltry two batting bonus points before this game and their coach, John Wright, a distinguished Test batsman for New Zealand, must be a puzzled man.

On paper Kent have the machinery to pile up the runs; in practice, they tend to dig themselves into huge holes and wait for the bowlers to come along with the metaphorical rope ladders. And that is roughly what happened here yesterday.

By the close of play Kent were looking a little bit sick themselves after Ben Phillips had whipped out Toby Radford and Neil Lenham for very few and the leg-spinner Paul Strang, having tied down the Railway End, then wicketed out Bill Athey and Keith Greenfield. But, unlike Kent, Sussex have not quite rolled over.

Nor have they treated the first 15 or so overs as if it were a Sun-

day League match. Kent had a couple of early shocks. Firstly they lost one of their openers, David Fulton, who retired hurt and headed off to the hospital for X-rays on his left forearm after receiving a nasty blow from Paul Jarvis off the second ball of the day (he eventually returned, bruised, to make an unbeaten 35).

Then Matthew Walker departed in the ninth over, by which time he and Trevor Ward had brought up the 50.

Ward, in partnership with the former Sussex captain Alan Wells (who must have dearly wanted to succeed), proceeded to flay the Sussex attack at approximately six runs an over. Much good it did them. They still finished with only one batting point, because, depleted as the Sussex bowling ranks are, the four who were used stuck to their task, howling an ideal line and length.

Vasbert Drakes is still nursing a side strain (one of three Sussex bowlers with a similar injury) and was only 80 per cent fit, but perhaps that was part of the secret of his control for a return of three wickets. Jarvis, too, displayed a deal of quality and was rewarded with three wickets.

But the pick of the day was Keith Newell, a deceptive medium pacer. It was he who accounted for Ward, ending his 85-ball stay - during which he struck a dozen boundaries - by having him caught behind for 67. That was the prelude for a career best 4 for 61 for the 25-year-old as he then accounted for Wells, Paul Strang and Ben Phillips.



Matthew Maynard, of Glamorgan, takes evasive action as Matthew Hayden goes on the attack for Hampshire yesterday Photograph: Peter Jay

Yorkshire made to struggle

Round-up

RICHARD WETHERELL

Somerset, who were in decent positions in their previous three Championship matches before the weather intervened, suffered a familiar fate at Taunton yesterday. They had Yorkshire on the rack at 52 for 3, yet an improvement from 3 for 2, before play was abandoned for the day at 2.30pm.

Kevin Shine, who had seen Michael Vaughan dropped off his first delivery of the match, removed Martyn Moxon for a duck two balls later.

Vaughan's reprieve proved momentary as in the next over he pushed forward to Andy Caddick and gave a routine catch to wicketkeeper Mike Burns.

When he was on 18 David Byas shouldered arms to a ball by Graham Rose which ripped back and clipped the stumps.

What little play that took place at Cardiff was dominated by Hampshire's Matthew Hayden. Before showers and bad light finally brought a close to a much-interrupted day with his side on 94 for 1, the Australian opener hit his first Championship half-century.

After losing Giles White, caught at third slip by Steve James off Wagar Younis, Hayden and Kevin James made steady progress. Hayden, 54 not out at the close, kept his concentration despite several breaks in play and reached his half-century off 92 balls by driving Darren Thomas through mid-off for his fourth boundary.

Lancashire are left becalmed

DAVE HADFIELD

reports from Old Trafford
Northamptonshire 281-4
v Lancashire

A potentially rewarding opening to Lancashire's County Championship season is offering thinner pickings by the day.

A fixture list bringing them into contact with the only three teams to finish below them in last year's Championship table held out the illusory promise of a flying start.

Rained off against Durham, soundly beaten by Nottinghamshire and now becalmed against Northamptonshire, Lancashire still cannot get airborne.

It could be argued that there were extenuating circumstances

at Old Trafford yesterday. England's cause deprived them of Michael Atherton, John Crawley and Graham Lloyd, while Wasim Akram and their captain, Mike Watkinson, were both injured.

The line-up had a threadbare look to it even before Warren Hegg joined the list of absentees, going off for treatment to a back spasm that had worried him all day and leaving the stand-in captain, Neil Fairbrother, to also deputise behind the stumps.

It was not a day's cricket from which many people would have regretted departing early. Against the depleted Lancashire attack, Northamptonshire ground their way steadily towards a big total, only lifting their run-rate when Kevin Curran was at the wicket.

More typical of their ponderous progress was Richard Montgomerie, who stuck around for almost three and a half hours for his 49 before becoming the second of two victims for Gary Keedy during Lancashire's only hopeful period of a wearing day.

Keedy had not appeared in the first team in any competition this season until yesterday, but he made up for his delayed reappearance from the shadows in terms of quantity, if not always of quality.

He had a long bowl and sometimes turned the ball sharply on a wicket that looked sufficiently encouraging for both sides to include two spinners, but also produced from his mixed bag too many short-pitched deliveries which even a side in as little apparent hurry

as Northamptonshire had to dispatch.

Between his capture of Rob Bailey, caught at short mid-off, and the fall of Montgomerie at slip, Curran announced his arrival by snuffing Keedy for six.

Although often deprived of the strike by his partner, Tony Penberthy, Curran managed to keep the scoreboard moving at a more respectable pace, including hitting one mighty six straight hitting past Peter Martin.

Steve Titchard's occasional medium pace saw off Penberthy with one that came through even more gently than usual, but Curran, who had survived a sharp caught and bowled chance to Martin on 21, remained undefeated on 91 when he had light ended a drab day. Lancashire are still wondering when the fun is due to start.

Jones shores up Derbyshire

MIKE CAREY

reports from Trent Bridge
Derbyshire 283-5
v Nottinghamshire

The pitches are green again at Trent Bridge this season. So, too, it may be argued, are many of Nottinghamshire's cricketers but there is no shortage of heart and ambition as Derbyshire discovered during the day of hard graft yesterday.

In the end, Derbyshire would have settled for making the best part of 300, especially after being put in, though this owed much to Dean Jones, who dropped anchor for some four hours and helped to camouflage events at the other end, where one batsman after another found a way of getting out after getting in.

As is often the case, the pitch looked more threatening than it played. The ball did not move much off the seam until, for some reason, in mid-afternoon: it was certainly too cold for it to swing, though the occasional uneven bounce and a sluggish pace meant that patience and self-discipline were prime requirements.

It was, too, a bleak day to be in the field with an inexperienced attack but, perhaps encouraged by the knowledge that Derbyshire's batsmen were either out of form or less than fully fit, they did not stick to their task well for the most part.

Late on in a demanding day their control of length and line was often variable and they will not want to concede so many runs from no balls and wides; but they would also have been cheered by the efforts of their 18-year-old fast bowler Paul Franks, who is clearly a genuine talent.

Even on this pitch he hit the bat hard and compelled the odd hurried stroke. He has clearly been well schooled in the Baseline League, where Harold Lawwood, Bill Vose and Les Jackson learned the rudiments of their trade, though as yet his 6ft 2in frame lacks the muscular power of that formidable trio.

He was unlucky to emerge wicketless. Wayne Noon, diving in front of first slip, which of course is his prerogative, dropped Chris Adams off him just after lunch. But the way he

unsettled Adams probably had much to do with his dismissal soon afterwards.

By then Derbyshire's batsman had embarked on a familiar pattern of digging in and then self-destructing. Only Adrian Rollins, meeting a ball from Graeme Archer that might have bounced more than most, could consider himself unfortunate.

Jones himself probably needs time in the middle and made sure he got it, even though he did not always locate the middle of the bat early on and was also obliged to treat Franks with some respect. Vince Clarke lent him solid support in a stand worth 122 in 39 overs before carving at a wide one, whereupon Jones was quick to accept the umpires' offer of the light.

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

Britannic Assurance County Championship (First day of four-day 11.0)	
Glamorgan v Hampshire CARDIFF: Glamorgan 245 for 1 in their first innings against Hampshire (0). Hampshire won 102-4.	
Hampshire - First innings G W White c James b Wagar 6 M L Hayden not out 23 R D Jones not out 23 Extras (b3, lb5, w2) 11 Total (for 1, 37 overs) 94	
Glamorgan - First innings To bat: J P Stephenson, R A Smith, W S Hendrick, I A N Aynes, S D Udell, J N B Boff, S M Maitland, C A Connor. Bowling: Wagar 12-3-33-1; Watkin 11-1-20-0; Thomas 6-0-19-0; Cosker 7-0-11-0; Dale 2-0-2-0. Extras (b3, lb5, w2) 11 Total (for 1, 37 overs) 94	
Lancashire v Northants OLD TRAFFORD: Northamptonshire 281 for 4 in their first innings against Lancashire (0). Lancashire won 102-4.	
Northamptonshire - First innings To bat: J P Stephenson, R A Smith, W S Hendrick, I A N Aynes, S D Udell, J N B Boff, S M Maitland, C A Connor. Bowling: Wagar 12-3-33-1; Watkin 11-1-20-0; Thomas 6-0-19-0; Cosker 7-0-11-0; Dale 2-0-2-0. Extras (b3, lb5, w2) 11 Total (for 1, 37 overs) 94	
Lancashire - First innings To bat: J P Stephenson, R A Smith, W S Hendrick, I A N Aynes, S D Udell, J N B Boff, S M Maitland, C A Connor. Bowling: Wagar 12-3-33-1; Watkin 11-1-20-0; Thomas 6-0-19-0; Cosker 7-0-11-0; Dale 2-0-2-0. Extras (b3, lb5, w2) 11 Total (for 1, 37 overs) 94	
Sussex v Kent HORSHAM: Sussex 102-4 in their first innings against Kent (0). Kent won 102-4.	
Sussex - First innings To bat: J P Stephenson, R A Smith, W S Hendrick, I A N Aynes, S D Udell, J N B Boff, S M Maitland, C A Connor. Bowling: Wagar 12-3-33-1; Watkin 11-1-20-0; Thomas 6-0-19-0; Cosker 7-0-11-0; Dale 2-0-2-0. Extras (b3, lb5, w2) 11 Total (for 1, 37 overs) 94	
Kent - First innings To bat: J P Stephenson, R A Smith, W S Hendrick, I A N Aynes, S D Udell, J N B Boff, S M Maitland, C A Connor. Bowling: Wagar 12-3-33-1; Watkin 11-1-20-0; Thomas 6-0-19-0; Cosker 7-0-11-0; Dale 2-0-2-0. Extras (b3, lb5, w2) 11 Total (for 1, 37 overs) 94	
No play yesterday CHESHIRE: Gloucestershire v Essex. LEICESTER: Leicestershire v Northamptonshire. EDGBASTON: Warwickshire v Middlesex.	
SECOND DAY CHAMPIONSHIP (First day of three-day 11.0): Southampton v Nottinghamshire 212-6 (1st innings); Essex v Gloucestershire 4-37 (1st innings); Surrey 56 for 1, Bedfordshire 212-6 (1st innings); Warwickshire v Lancashire 117 for 2, Northamptonshire 240 for 1, Bedfordshire 212-6 (1st innings); Warwickshire v Lancashire 117 for 2, Northamptonshire 240 for 1, Bedfordshire 212-6 (1st innings).	
Today TENDON TROPHY (One day, 11.0): Headingley: England v Australia.	

Saeed smashes one-day record

Saeed Anwar, the Pakistan opener, established a world record in one-day international cricket yesterday, hitting 194 to help his side score 337 for 5 in 50 overs against India in the four-nation Independence Cup in Madras.

The 28-year-old left-hander, playing in Pakistan's last preliminary match of the tournament, surpassed the previous record of 189 established by Viv Richards of the West Indies against England in 1984.

Saeed was in such devastating form that he hit India's leg spinner, Anil Kumble, for 26 runs in one over that included three successive sixes and one four.

Rameez Raja, the Pakistan captain, decided to bat first after winning the toss and the wicket offered no assistance to India's bowlers.

Saeed batted for 206 minutes, most part of it with acute cramps which forced him to use Shahid Afridi as his runner just after he had completed his half century.

Saeed struck 22 fours and five sixes in reaching 194. His wicket finally fell as he appeared to be heading toward a double century. A mistimed pull off Sachin Tendulkar was caught at fine leg by Saurav Ganguly. A partisan Indian crowd of 50,000 gave him a standing ovation.

He shared three good partnerships, 89 runs for the second wicket with Rameez (22), 126 for the third wicket with Ijaz Ahmed (39) and 84 runs for the fourth wicket with Ijazam-ul-Haq (39 not out).

The winner of India-Pakistan match will play against the world champions, Sri Lanka, in the best-of-three final. The four-nation tournament has been organised by India as part of 50th anniversary of its independence. New Zealand lost to Sri Lanka in the first semi-final which was played on Tuesday.

Viv Richards' previous best innings of 189, at Old Trafford in 1984, came off 170 balls, with 24 fours and five sixes, one of which was hit out of the ground.

TOP 10 INNINGS IN ONE-DAY INTERNATIONALS

194	Saeed Anwar	Pakistan v India, Madras 1997
189	Viv Richards	West Indies v England, Old Trafford 1984
188	G Kirsten	S Africa v UAE, Rawalpindi 1995-6
175	Kapil Dev	India v Zimbabwe, Trent Bridge 1983
174	A J A Richardson	West Indies v Sri Lanka, Sharjah 1985-6
167	R A Smith	England v Australia, Edgbaston 1993
166	D J Cullum	S Africa v NZ, Verwoerdsburg 1994-5
160	S C Lara	West Indies v Sri Lanka, Sharjah 1985-6
158	A C Hoddson	England v Australia, Edgbaston 1993
151	A C Hoddson	S Africa v Netherlands, Rawalpindi 1995-6
150	D J Gower	England v New Zealand, Brisbane 1982-3



Saeed Anwar: Stand of 194

Tray success
ice claims fo

WING RESULTS

Camelot wins out in Lupe lottery

Racing

RICHARD EDMONDSON reports from Goodwood

It was an apposite commentary on the status of the Lupe Stakes as an Oaks trial that yesterday's Listed contest went to a filly that was not only not among the Epsom entries but running in the race merely to get a handicap mark. Oh, and Maid Of Camelot was also her stable's second string.

The greatest glory that Roger Charlton's filly had achieved before yesterday was victory in the racing equivalent of the Bath, the sort of form which allowed her to be sent off at 10.1. If there was little interest in Maid Of Camelot's movement before competition there was unusual attention directed towards another contestant.

Meshehd had earned her place in posterity by kicking Willie Carson into retirement, and the ghoul collected yesterday to see if Richard Hills could get on her back before he ended up on his.

It was decided that Meshehd should be mounted inside her box and when her trainer, Ben Hanbury, held the door open for Hills, the jockey's countenance suggested he was being helped over the threshold into Hades. Hanbury was rather amused by his confederate's reticence and half expected a

white feather to come under the stable door. "If Richard ever saw a fence in front of him I think he'd die," the trainer said.

Hanbury, Savile Row's greatest friend, expects to have his first runner in the Derby next month with Fabris, who has recovered from having a hole drilled in his snout to alleviate a sinus problem. The colt will

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Statutory
(Goodwood 3.10)
NB: King Alex
(Goodwood 2.40)

receive plenty of vocal support from the press room at Epsom, which is not entirely unconnected to Hanbury's promise to send up a crate of champagne to the scribblers if he is successful. Certainly, he is more

chances of winning Group races with Fabris than Meshehd, which is not entirely unconnected to Hanbury's promise to send up a crate of champagne to the scribblers if he is successful. Certainly, he is more

chances of winning Group races with Fabris than Meshehd, which is not entirely unconnected to Hanbury's promise to send up a crate of champagne to the scribblers if he is successful. Certainly, he is more

hibited the superior stamina to regain the lead from Priena, who just held off the winner's stablemate Keyboggle for second.

"Maid Of Camelot is very idle at home and doesn't do a lot," Roger Charlton, the winning trainer, reported. "Keyboggle would be 10 lengths in front of her. She is not in the Oaks but something like the Ribblesdale (Stakes) should be a natural race for her."

This was a great victory for the unsung as the winner's partner was Tim Sprake, the 29-year-old jockey who remains about as fashionable as bootlaces among the owning fraternity. This is not to say that Sprake cannot ride - a point which is not lost on Charlton. "Tim rides sensibly and well and he certainly doesn't let the side down in big races," the trainer said.

More pertinent Classic information yesterday concerned the Irish 2,000 Guineas and the Derby. Peter Chapple-Hyam will now be doubly represented at the Curragh on Sunday (as will Robert Sangster) following the decision to add Romanov's make him an 8-1 chance and have his celebratory stablemate Revogue as their 4-5 favourite.

Kieren Fallon, who misses today after damaging a ligament in his arm here, was yesterday



Field day: St Radegund sets a notable bench mark when winning Goodwood's maiden race for fillies yesterday

Photograph: Robert Hallam

confirmed as the Derby partner of Symonds Inn, whose task is to become the first Derby winner from the North since 1945 and Dante on 7 June.

Jimmy Fitzgerald's colt worked briskly on Tuesday in typical son-like manner, with his nose in the air. "That's just his confidence," Fitzgerald said. "People think that just because he carries his head high

he might not be 100 per cent genuine, but they should look at the horse's confirmation before they draw their conclusions. Symonds Inn walks around with his head in the air almost

as if he is proud of himself. He even stands in his box with his head up." Ladbrokes' odds are 25-1 that Symonds Inn will be looking down on his Derby rivals two weeks on Saturday.

Stray success as fence claims four

The sort of sickening spectacle that gives animal-rights activists powerful ammunition with which to attack the exploitation of horses by the racing industry occurred when four horses came down at the penultimate fence in the novice chase at Worcester yesterday, writes John Cobb.

The immediate consequences were the first, and almost certainly the most improbable, winner of Jack Smith's training career when Stray Harmony gained victory at 66-1, and a four-day suspension for improper riding.

Stray Harmony, who was also achieving her first success at the age of seven, was a distant fourth when Who Is Equine came to the fence in front in the two-mile, seven-furlong contest.

Who Is Equine breasted the fence and fell, and was swiftly joined on the floor by Carvelite, who came down independently. At this stage the race looked at the mercy of the David Nicholson-trained Dream Ride, who jumped down the fence only to be brought down by the writhing body of Who Is Equine.

Making the most of her good fortune, Stray Harmony safely negotiated the final two obstacles to finish alone.

Bellamy, who had pulled up Kellytina at the fourth fence from home, decided to rejoin the battle, his eyes fixed on the £934 up for grabs for second place. But the exhausted grey staggered over the third last, attempted to refuse at the second last and ended up marooned on top of the fence.

The jockey was found guilty by stewards of improper riding and banned on 30 and 31 May and 5 and 6 June.

Martin Pipe secured his 200th winner of the season when Nordic Breeze cruised home at odds-on at Newcut Abbot last night.

Mark Birch, one of the leading jockeys in the North for nearly 30 years, has retired from the saddle. He has hung up his boots, aged 48, having ridden around 1,500 winners worldwide, most of them for the Makton trainer, Peter Eastery.

RACING RESULTS

GOODWOOD
2.10: 1. ST RADGUND (M) 11.5, 2. Maid Of Camelot (F) 10.1, 3. Keyboggle (F) 10.1, 4. Priena (F) 10.1, 5. Revogue (F) 10.1, 6. Romanov (F) 10.1, 7. Dante (F) 10.1, 8. Symonds Inn (F) 10.1, 9. Stray Harmony (F) 10.1, 10. Who Is Equine (F) 10.1, 11. Carvelite (F) 10.1, 12. Dream Ride (F) 10.1, 13. Nordic Breeze (F) 10.1, 14. Stray Harmony (F) 10.1, 15. Who Is Equine (F) 10.1, 16. Carvelite (F) 10.1, 17. Dream Ride (F) 10.1, 18. Nordic Breeze (F) 10.1, 19. Stray Harmony (F) 10.1, 20. Who Is Equine (F) 10.1, 21. Carvelite (F) 10.1, 22. Dream Ride (F) 10.1, 23. Nordic Breeze (F) 10.1, 24. Stray Harmony (F) 10.1, 25. Who Is Equine (F) 10.1, 26. Carvelite (F) 10.1, 27. Dream Ride (F) 10.1, 28. Nordic Breeze (F) 10.1, 29. Stray Harmony (F) 10.1, 30. Who Is Equine (F) 10.1, 31. Carvelite (F) 10.1, 32. Dream Ride (F) 10.1, 33. Nordic Breeze (F) 10.1, 34. Stray Harmony (F) 10.1, 35. Who Is Equine (F) 10.1, 36. Carvelite (F) 10.1, 37. Dream Ride (F) 10.1, 38. Nordic Breeze (F) 10.1, 39. 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sport

Leonard given Lions captaincy as Rodber returns to scene of crime

Rugby Union
CHRIS HEWETT
reports from Durban

Virgin territory for a dozen new Lions, an uncomfortable feeling of *déjà vu* for Tim Rodber. Three years after leaving Port Elizabeth in disgrace following his dismissal in the now infamous Battle of Boet Erasmus - "What do you have to do to get sent off around here?" he asked the referee that night, only to find out for himself a couple of minutes later - the England No 8 returns to the same stadium on Saturday for the opening fixture of the tour.

No wonder Rodber was feeling queasy yesterday, confined to his hotel room with a feverish high temperature, the Northampton captain was probably the victim of cold sweats as well as hot ones as he contemplated another meeting with Eastern Province. "The incidents that occurred in the England game in Port Elizabeth in

1994 are an irrelevance," insisted Fran Cotton, the Lions manager. Maybe, but old indignities die hard and Rodber would be less than human were he not to fall prey to some bitter memories between now and the weekend.

Many will argue that Cotton and his fellow selectors should have exercised some diplomacy and allowed Rodber to sit this one out, but they were right to take the opposite view. By picking England's Five Nations back row en bloc, they have given themselves their best chance of hitting the ground running and dealing with a home side crammed with ringers.

Ian McGeechan, the coach, always planned to make full use of established combinations in the early games and he was true to his principles yesterday. Jeremy Guscott and Scott Gibbs, the 1993 Test centres in New Zealand, renew their acquaintance on Saturday while Keith Wood and Jason Leonard bring their Harlequins club partnership to the front row.

With Martin Johnson opting

for a breather after a 40-match domestic campaign - no English club player gave more of himself last season than the Leicester lock - Leonard has been awarded the captaincy. "This is a high-pressure game and Jason has enormous experience," Cotton said. "He knows what it is to run out in front of 45,000 people away from home and that knowledge will be invaluable."

While Cotton stressed that Leonard should not be considered a *de facto* vice-captain, it is clear that he is highly prized as a senior tourist. "It's a massive honour and one I didn't expect to receive," said the universally popular and deeply respected prop. "While this game can only be seen as a big challenge - I don't expect any easy matches in South Africa - there are a number of very experienced players in the line-up and that helps."

"I'll have a quiet word in one or two ears before the game but we all know why we're here." Leonard's role is one of the most intriguing aspects of the tour. Equally capable on both

sides of the scrum, he will play at tight-head, his current position for both club and country, against the Easterns. But he suggested before the tour that he might well switch to loose-head at some stage - he shifted in the opposite direction with enormous effect when the Lions took on the All Blacks four years ago - and left the question hanging once again yesterday. "Who knows what lies around the corner," he said, cryptically.

The Springboks, firm believers that successful rugby starts in the front row, consider the Lions to be short of clout up front and are confident of uncovering a weakness or two at the sharp end. If Tom Smith, the Scottish new boy, and Graham Rowntree, the current England loose-head, fail to impress early on, they may well find Leonard on their case as well as a meaty South African or two.

Only Paul Grayson, the outside-half from Northampton, was not considered for the opener. He has survived a couple of punishing, full-contact training sessions on firm surfaces

and if the strained muscle in his right thigh continues to respond to treatment, he will almost certainly face Border in East London on Wednesday.

Johan Kluys, the Eastern Province coach, confirmed yesterday that two celebrated Springboks from Transvaal, Kobus Wiese and Hennie le Roux, would square up to the Lions on Saturday and also picked Theo van Rensburg, the former Test full-back, and Matthew Webber, a highly rated flanker from New Zealand, in his starting line-up.

Rian van Jaarsveld, a promising centre, and Armand de Preez, a second row forward with a colourful disciplinary record outside of the game as well as inside it, have returned to Port Elizabeth after spells at Transvaal while Ken Ford plays at outside-half under the terms of a mould-breaking twinning agreement between the two provinces. **LIONS** (v Eastern Province, Port Elizabeth, Saturday): N. Jenkins; J. Bentley, J. Guscott, S. Gibbs, N. Beal; G. Townsend, R. Howley; T. Smith, K. Wood, J. Leonard, K. Ford, G. Wair, S. Shaw, I. Dallaglio, T. Rodber, R. Hill, Substitutes: T. Underwood, A. Bateman, M. Davison, P. Wallace, S. Williams, S. Quinlan.



Monica Seles plays a double-handed forehand in her 6-0, 6-1 destruction of Maria Antonia Sanchez in the second round of the Madrid Open yesterday. Photograph: AFP

Cook the latest to join Giants

Rugby League
DAVE HADFIELD

Huddersfield have continued their drive for Super League status by signing the utility back Paul Cook from Bradford for £70,000.

Cook, a 20-year-old winger or full-back who played for England in the 1995 World Cup, is the fourth player with Super League experience to join the Giants in the last two weeks. He follows the London Broncos winger Ikram Butt, forward Paul Dixon from Sheffield and Leeds' Great Britain Academy prop, Nick Fozzard.

"Fozzard and Cook in particular are players we have identified as wanting to bring here for a long time," Les Coulter, the Huddersfield chief executive, said.

"Our chairman, Ken Davy, has put down another marker for our ambitions, as these are the sort of players who can not

only get us into Super League but keep us there."

Huddersfield, three points behind Hull at the top of the First Division, are clearly stocking up with Super League in mind, which raises suspicions that they believe more than the proposed one club will be promoted at the end of this season. Coulter said he had heard rumours of an expansion to 14 clubs. "Our aim is to win promotion as champions," he said. "Failing that, if there is going to be an expansion, we want to be in the best possible place to be considered."

St Helens will be without their stand-off, Tommy Martyn, for the rest of the season, following the news that he needs a second knee reconstruction in two years.

The winding-up order brought against Halifax by the Inland Revenue was withdrawn when it came before the High Court yesterday. The club have satisfied the Inland Revenue with a plan to pay off £100,000 in back tax.

Witch Way for Funnell

Equestrianism
GENEVIEVE MURPHY

Pippa Funnell had not expected to be among the competitors for the Chubb Insurance Windsor International Horse Trials, which begin today in Windsor Great Park. Having won the international section there for the last two years, she did not have a suitable mount in her yard on which to aim for a hat-trick.

Funnell has since been offered the ride on Witch Way whose owner, Briony Holloway, was injured in a fall at Daintsey last month. Funnell has had one outing with the mare when finishing seventh at Goring Heath at the end of April.

"I wanted to support Windsor and I aim to have some fun there," Funnell said. Although Witch Way is a nice quality mare, she lacks experience and is unlikely to produce a good enough dressage test to give Funnell a third victory.

The value of Windsor as a

stepping stone to greater things was demonstrated at Punchestown in Ireland last weekend, when Funnell finished runner-up to the United States rider Bruce Davidson on Squeek. Funnell was riding Designer Tramp, who won at Windsor two years ago.

Lucinda Murray is another competitor who is taking over from an injured rider. She will be on Night Flight VII who was due to be ridden by her owner, Sarah Brown, until she sustained back and arm injuries in a recent fall. Last year Brown jumped clear cross-country and show jumping rounds in the national section at Windsor to finish in ninth place.

Andrew Nicholson will be riding in his fifth three-day event in the same number of weeks when he rides the former point-to-point horse Whit Monday, one of 34 horses in the New Zealand's Somerset yard. The nine-year-old, who is a big and leggy horse of 17.3 hands, finished sixth in the French three-day event at Pau last year.

All change for Admiral's

Sailing
STUART ALEXANDER

Changes to Britain's Admiral's Cup preparation are in full flow just two months before the three-boat team takes on some formidable opposition from New Zealand, America, Italy, Germany and Scandinavia.

The appointment of Chris Law as principal helmsman on Graham Walker's Corum Indulgence is strengthened by bringing in three top sailors from the Corum team, probably including Luc Gelluseau.

The boat, which has been shipped back from the United States, is to have the slightly oversize keel reshaped and further changes may be made to improve its handicap rating even if this were to take it outside the rules for the Corel 45 class in which it normally sails.

The 40-footer Easy Oars continues to make solid progress and further optimisation is part of owner Tony Buckingham's plan to counter the threat of the all-conquering Italian 40-footer, Pasquale Landolfi's Brava.

The only hiccup at the mo-

ment are within the Mumm 36 campaign, where Tim Barrett's Bradamante was shipped in error to Italy and both masts were damaged. But Bradamante, with Olympic silver medalists John Merricks and Ian Walker calling the shots, had to be in Italy by next week anyway for the Mumm 36 World Championship at Punta Ala.

They have a new mast, are also doing some work on their keel, and are anxious to bring some momentum back to a campaign which had an encouraging start in Key West and Miami.

What is causing them problems is the lack of offshore racing practice so far achieved and some doubts over funding. There was an earlier agreement over support for the Mumm 36, but not all of that is in place and without it the boat would have to stop racing between the world championship and the Admiral's Cup.

More confident in that area is the Royal Yachting Association, whose bid for lottery funding via the Sports Council should be ratified on 6 June. The RYA hopes to get up to £3m a year for the next three years.

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Anti-Perspirant for Men is
smooth upfront and strong
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perspiration the runaround.
So if your anti-perspirant
doesn't have this ability,
it's time for a transfer.

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PERSPIRATION
EASY ON
YOUR SKIN**

مكتبة من المجلد

Blackburn in £3m bid for Sforza

Football
ALAN NIXON

Roy Hodgson's Swiss connections have led Blackburn Rovers to offer Internazionale £3m for the midfielder Ciriaco Sforza. Rovers, who have already made a £4.2m bid for Sforza's fellow-countryman and Borussia Dortmund striker Stéphane Chapuisat, made their move just hours before Inter played Schalke in last night's UEFA Cup final second leg.

The Premiership club are confident that Hodgson, who leaves Inter to manage Blackburn next month, can persuade Sforza to follow him to Ewood Park if the bid is accepted.

Hodgson has been Sforza's mentor since he was in charge of the Swiss national side and he took him to Inter last summer. Kaiserslautern, just promoted back to the Bundesliga, are also keen to sign Sforza, but are unlikely to be able to match Rovers' personal terms.

The prospects of Inter getting their hands on Barcelona's Ronaldo are slim. The club's president, Massimo Moratti, confirmed he had made an offer for striker, but was awaiting developments "with fatalism".

"If you want my impressions, I don't think that Ronaldo will choose Inter," said Moratti, who is reported to have offered Barcelona a £40m deal for the 20-year-old Brazilian.

Shay Given, tired of being Tim Flowers' goalkeeping understudy, has turned down a new contract at Rovers paving the way for the expected move to Newcastle United. Given's impending arrival should nudge the transfer-listed keeper Pavel Srnicek even further towards West Ham who, however, will need to increase their £500,000 offer. Bruno N'Gotty will not be playing in the black and white stripes next season, the defender having signed a one-year extension to his three-year contract at Paris St-Germain.

Bolton Wanderers have ex-communicated Neil Cox from the mire at relegated Middlesbrough for £1.5m. The full-back, irked at being left out of the FA Cup final, has been critical of his Boro team-mates, including making personal attacks on

Fabrizio Ravanelli. Not surprisingly, Cox, whose contract expires next month, rapidly agreed to join the Premiership newcomers.

Bolton were just as enthusiastic. "I acted very, very quickly. He has a wealth of experience for someone who is only 25," Bolton's manager Colin Todd said. "He is another very good quality acquisition."

Kevin Kilbane, the Preston North End winger, has become the first £1m signing in West Bromwich Albion's history. The fee exceeds Albion's 18-year-old transfer record of £750,000, paid to Manchester City for another winger, Peter Barnes. Midfielder Julian Darby has left Albion for Preston in a separate deal worth £150,000.

The Dutch goalkeeper Edwin Zoetebeier is expected to become Sunderland's first signing as a First Division club. The 27-year-old will give his decision on the £1m move from Volendam in the next fortnight.

Grimsby Town and Walsall saw their managers depart yesterday, but in differing circumstances. Kenny Swain was dismissed by the Mariners in the wake of the relegation to the Second Division, while Chris Nicholl resigned at Bescot Stadium, despite efforts to make him sign a new contract.

The former Grimsby manager Alan Buckley, who was sacked by West Brom in January, may return for his second spell at Blundell Park, but his Walsall connections could also make him a candidate for their unexpected vacancy.

Shrewsbury Town have entrusted Jake King, their former captain, with the task of revitalising the club after their drop into the Third Division. The 42-year-old Scot, who takes over from the sacked Fred Davies, had only been the manager of non-league neighbours Telford since November.

Garry Nelson, the Torquay United player-coach and author of the widely-acclaimed *Left Foot Forward*, an account of his life as a journeyman player, has retired from football and quit his job at Plainmoor. The 36-year-old Nelson is taking up a senior post with the Professional Footballers' Association, the players' union.



Nick Faldo practises at Wentworth yesterday for tomorrow's Volvo PGA Championship.

Photograph: Allsport

Faldo hails the Woods phenomenon

Golf
ANDY FARRELL

Familiar surroundings, home comforts and the absence of Tiger Woods are the factors that Nick Faldo hopes will spark a resurgence in his fortunes. While Woods is playing a different game to the rest of his tour colleagues, Faldo is beginning to talk a different game.

Tiger is doing what he wants to do at the moment," Faldo said. "His game is amazing. His key clubs are the driver and the putter. If those two are working, then he is unbeatable."

Faldo has not used such words about any other player in his 20-year career. While praise for Woods, who returned after a month's break following his Masters triumph to win again in the United States last week, from lesser mortals is commonplace, it is faintly shocking from the player who, with six majors, has come closest to dominating over the last 10 years.

"It was the same deal with Nicklaus," Faldo continued. "There are no par-fives for Tiger. Even on the monsters he gets there in two. When you are hitting eight-irons instead of four-irons into greens, there are no tough pin placements. He's got the game throttled."

"Modern golf course design has to cater for this kind of length. Bunkers need to range from 250 yards to 350, so that every one is playing the same kind of shot. Or, maybe put a lake at 300 yards on every hole. At least, it would look pretty. It's amazing

that one guy has come along and they are thinking of changing all the historic golf courses.

"But he's doing it, and good luck to him. He's built for the 90s, both in his game and in the media attention. He has made a major contribution to what the US tour will now be playing for." This last was a reference to the negotiations for the television contracts in America, which will see tournament purses doubling to over \$3m (£1.87m), on average, in two years' time.

As for the chances of Woods completing golf's mythical modern Grand Slam, Faldo puts his odds as more than twice as good as when he "got pretty close" in 1990. That was the year he won the Masters and the Open, and in between tipped out to get into a play-off for the US Open.

"The only one of this year's venue in theory where he might be out of whack is Troon, if he is not used to playing in a gale and with rock hard ground. But then again, it might rain. When courses are wet and the ball stays where it is hit, then he has a huge advantage."

Faldo has changed his schedule to tee up tomorrow in the Volvo PGA Championship at Wentworth and is hoping to gain some of the Ryder Cup points he missed out on by missing the cut at the Masters. "It took a while, but that is behind me now," he said. "My short game has come on this year and I've been working on my putting. I'm in a flat spell right now, but I'm planning on playing through it as quickly as possible and getting off on another good run."

Zoeller makes his peace with Tiger

Tiger Woods and Fuzzy Zoeller held their long-awaited meeting at Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth yesterday and both golfers said they hoped they could at last put their Masters controversy behind them.

Zoeller was criticised for his remarks at the conclusion of last month's Masters about what the record-breaking winner Woods might decide to have served at next year's champions' dinner. Zoeller had already publicly apologised for his clumsy stab at humour, but yesterday's 20-minute lunch in the players dining room was their first face-to-face meeting, one that Woods had said he was looking forward to.

"We had a nice lunch and a nice conversation. I let him know how I feel and heard what he was thinking and now it's behind us," Woods said. "Now I understand the enthusiasm and hope we can both have a good week this year."

Zoeller who had described his life as "total hell" since the incident, did not appear at yesterday's news conference, but said he was glad to have the meeting behind him.

"Everything went good and positive. We're looking straight ahead and moving on from

here," he said. "I just hope something positive comes from this."

Zoeller said he had briefly considered retiring, but decided to come to Fort Worth and face Woods before this week's \$1.6m (£1m) Colonial PGA tournament.

Woods will be going for his third successive win this week at the Colonial and his seventh professional victory worldwide, and sixth on the PGA Tour, since leaving the amateur ranks. "My goal is always to get better and that's what I hope to do this week," Woods said.

TODAY'S NUMBER

48

The number of times Peterborough manager Barry Fry uses the "F" word in next week's ITV documentary, which followed him during the season - nine times more than England manager Graham Taylor in the documentary *Do I Not Like That*.

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New writ for Venables

Terry Venables is facing another court battle, this time with former Portsmouth director Terry Brady, who is seeking repayment of a loan he says he made to the First Division club.

Brady left the board at Fratton Park last October after clashing with the then managing director, Martin Gregory, over the money available for new signings. He had been a director at Fratton Park for only eight months, after providing an interest-free £500,000 loan to help the club buy Martin Allen from West Ham.

Now Brady is demanding Pompey pay back the money he claims they owe him. But the

club are fighting the writ, saying the money was not a loan but an investment to buy shares.

The case appeared briefly before the Chancery Division of the High Court in London, but was adjourned for a second hearing. Now the two sides will meet to try to sort out the dispute over the money.

Nick Trainer, Portsmouth's solicitor, warned yesterday that the dispute could take up to two years to settle.

Trainer said no shares were ever issued to Brady because the club were unsure how much he was prepared to invest, but added that Brady could have whatever shares he had paid for.

Sorenstam's tough assignment

Annika Sorenstam knows she is following the game's toughest act at Pumpkin Ridge.

Yesterday she got her first look at the golf course on the south side of the 36-hole Pumpkin Ridge layout where the US Women's Open will be played on 10 to 13 July. She flew in on Monday from Delaware, where she finished third at the LPGA Championship. On Wednesday, she leaves for Frisco, Texas, the site of this weekend's LPGA Skins Game.

It is the kind of cross-country odyssey that is required of

the defending champion of the most important event in women's golf. Five others have won consecutive US Women's Open titles, but no one has won three in a row.

"It would be incredible," Sorenstam said. "I think about it a lot. I have an opportunity to do something nobody else has done, which is a big challenge. But on the other hand, I tell myself 'Don't feel like you have to do it. You have won it twice in a row.'"

Already, this has been a successful year for the 26-year-old from Sweden by way of the Uni-

versity of Arizona. She was married to her long-time beau Dave Eisch on 4 January, and already has won three tournaments.

The par-71, 6,415-yard Witch Hollow course for this week has been set up to provide a particularly testing challenge of the players' all round game, but that will not shake Sorenstam's resolve. Quite the opposite. The tougher the course, the better, she said yesterday. "It seems like I do well on the golf courses where conditions are tricky, when par is a good score," she said.

Already, this has been a successful year for the 26-year-old from Sweden by way of the Uni-

SPORTING DIGEST

Lewis slates US 'cover up'

Athletics

Carl Lewis has accused the sport's authorities in the United States of trying to cover up the abuse of performance-enhancing drugs after it emerged yesterday that two more American athletes are embroiled in a doping scandal.

A few days after a furore involving Sandra Farmer-Patrick and Mary Slaney, two unnamed American athletes have tested positive for banned drugs.

Lewis, America's most successful athlete, said of US track and field authorities: "There is no question in my mind that they have more knowledge

about the drug problem than they are telling the public."

"The problem [in US athletics] now is that the structure has broken down and the doping problem is being ignored and sometimes supported... They are overlooking the drug problem and, in some cases, may have even tried to protect athletes."

International Amateur Athletic Federation officials in Monaco were unable to confirm the two positive tests.

IAAF sources could not name the substances involved or when the tests were held, but they said US officials were expected to inform them of the results in the next few days.

Makinen seeking repeat

Rallying

Tommi Makinen, whose Argentina rally victory proved the turning point of last season and set him on course for the world title, has his sights on a repeat triumph.

"After last year's result, I am looking forward to the event very much. I think it will be very good for our car," he said ahead of today's start of the seventh round of the championship.

It marks the half-way stage of the season, with a course through the high-altitude mountain regions of the Andes

Makinen, who was forced to withdraw from the previous round in Corsica after a bizarre accident when he hit a cow, leads the standings by two points from Britain's Colin McRae. Carlos Saliz of Spain is joint third with the part-time Italian driver Piero Liatti.

For McRae, the Argentina event is a return to the scene of his most disappointing outing last season. He was fined after colliding with spectators in a service area. But after a stirring victory in Corsica two weeks ago, the Subaru driver is eager for the victory that would give him the world championship lead.

Tonkov has the edge in sprint finish

Cycling

Pavel Tonkov, the defending champion, beat Luc Leblanc, Marco Pantani and Ivan Gotti in a four-way sprint in the first mountainous stage of the Giro d'Italia yesterday, retaining the pink jersey and strengthening his overall lead.

The victory in the fifth stage - his second in three days - gave the 28-year-old Russian cyclist the edge in the overall standings as most of his rivals finished well behind in the uphill race which ended at 1,675 metres on Terminiello peak.

Tonkov, the 1996 Giro winner, completed the distance in 6hr 14min 58sec at an average speed of 21.325mph.

Leblanc rushed ahead 200m from the finish line, but Tonkov was quick to fight back and beat him. Leblanc lifted himself from fourth to second place overall, 41sec behind Tonkov.

"It was a tough stage because of rain," said Tonkov, who is competing in the race with a bandaged left wrist, following an accident last month. "I proved in good form. I'm glad to be at the top, but there's still a long way to go."

The race, which ends in Milan on 8 June, continues today with a 130-mile fully stage from Rieti to Lanciano.

Athletics

Michael Johnson and Donovan Bailey have finally got their names in the record books. The International Amateur Athletic Federation yesterday formally ratified the world records set by the two at last summer's Atlanta Olympics - Johnson's 19.32sec for the 200 metres and Bailey's 9.84 in the 100m.

France's double Olympic champion Marie-Jose Perec will attempt an unprecedented 400 metres and 400 metres hurdles double at the Athens World Championships this August.

Badminton

SUDAMIN CUP WORLD BADMINTON MIXED TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP (Singapore) Group 2: Germany 3 Japan 2, Taiwan 3 Thailand 2, South Africa 4 Austria 1, Hong Kong 5 Finland 0, Greece 4th, Ukraine 5 Czech Republic 6, Wales 5 Switzerland 0, Group 3: Belarus 5 Portugal 0, France 5 Belgium 0, Group 4: Spain 4 Peru 1, Group 5: Malaysia 3 Israel 2, South Africa 4 Jamaica 1, Group 6: Scotland 5 Greece 0, Lithuania 5 Armenia 0.

Ballroom dancing

Ballroom dancing has enlisted the backing of sports marketing mogul Mark McCormack as it seeks to become an Olympic sport in the next century. The International DanceSport Federation has teamed up with McCormack's International Management Group (IMG) in a bid to raise its profile, be recognised as a sport and gain Olympic status.

Baseball

The Chicago Bulls held the Heat to just 11 points in the fourth quarter as they charged to an 84-77 recovery victory over Miami on Tuesday in the opening game of the Eastern Conference Finals. Michael Jordan scored 37 points, Scottie Pippen had 24 points and Dennis Rodman pulled down 19 rebounds for the Bulls, who trailed by as many as 15 points in the first half, by 11 at halftime and by five at the end of three quarters.

Chris Finch, a Sheffield Sharks player, for the past three seasons, has been appointed coach to the Bundesliga League club. He replaces fellow American Jim Brandon, who joined Manchester Giants on Tuesday.

NBA play-off Eastern Conference Finals: Chicago 84 Miami 77 (Chicago leads best-of-seven series 1-0).

Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Cleveland 4 Kansas City 3, Baltimore 4 Detroit 3, NY Yankees 0 Toronto 2, CH White Sox 10 Boston 1, Milwaukee 3 Minnesota 4, Texas 8 Oakland 3, Anaheim 11 Seattle 0.

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Florida 6 NY Mets 5, Atlanta 4 Montreal 2, Chicago Cubs 2 Philadelphia 3, Houston 4 Cincinnati 7, St Louis 5 Pittsburgh 1, San Diego 7 Los Angeles 3, San Francisco 6 Colorado 3.

Boxing

Glenn Corbett has been lined up to fight American Manuel Lopez in the first defence of his World Boxing Council international middleweight title. The 35-year-old Royal Jersey professional carded a six-under-par 67.

SCOTTISH LIFEBEATERS SENIOR CLUB PROFESSIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP (Fifehead Rye, Dorset) Second round: 137 T Horton (Royal Jersey) 70 67, 143 A Brooks (Royal St George's) 74 68, 5 Jeeves (Preston Park) 71 73, 143 D Huel (North Borewood) 74 69, 146 M Higgins (Chesham) 73 75, 145 D 72, 72 G Burroughs (Green Hts) 73 75, 145 C D Caley (Combe Hill) 71 74, H Boyle (Royal Walsley) 75 77, 147 B Wines (North) 73 74, 1 Rhinos (South Salford) 72 75, 1 Squires (Bosham) 73 74, 148 T O'Mearney (Newcastle) 73 72, 148 H Jackson (73 73), 130 F H (Thamesmead) 73 77, H Patten (Rotherham) 75 74, H Macdonald (Southwell) 72 75, B Hunt (North) 73 77, D East (Red) 75 75, A Hall (All Green) 72 75.

Handball

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP PRELIMINARY ROUND (Yamanoto, Japan) Group A: Japan 23 Saudi Arabia 20 (half-time 15-10), Group B: Italy 19 Norway 19 (10-9), France 24 Argentina 20 (12-8), Group C: Tunisia 19 Portugal 18 (9-7), Spain 32 Brazil 11 (15-5), Group D: Russia 30 Morocco 23 (14-7), Hungary 22 Cuba 21 (11-8).

Leading overall standings: 1 Tonkov 18 hours 22 minutes and 49 seconds; 2 Leblanc +41; 3 Gotti +67; 4 Pantani +73; 5 Pantani +81.

Football

Gremio and Flamengo played out a draw, four-nil-nil O-U draw in the first leg of the Copa Brazil final on Tuesday. The result, in Gremio's stadium in the southern city of Porto Alegre, slightly favoured Flamengo who will play today's second leg at home in Rio de Janeiro.

Yugoslav striker Miladin Banovic has joined Marseille from Lille on a three-year contract. A Lille official said yesterday, Banovic scored 13 goals this season but failed to save Lille from relegation to the French Second Division.

Claiming foreigners are robbing them of their jobs, Spanish players have set a 30 June deadline for officials to lower the number of non-European Union players in the Spanish league. Although the player's union did not issue a strike call, a walk-out has been discussed in the past.

Golf

Former European Ryder Cup star Tommy Horton fired an eagle and three birdies in successive holes to extend his lead in the Scottish Life Ben Sayers Senior Club Professional Championship at Coworth to five shots yesterday. The 55-year-old Royal Jersey professional carded a six-under-par 67.

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NBA play-off Eastern Conference Finals: Chicago 84 Miami 77 (Chicago leads best-of-seven series 1-0).

Sailing

At the Spa Olympic regatta in Medemblik, Netherlands, Ben Ainslie, the Olympic silver medalist, had a disappointing opening with two 11th places and one first place in the Laser class. The world No 1, Shirley Robertson concentrated for Britain with two firsts and a second in the Europe class.

The 1996 Olympic bronze medalist Courtney Becker-Day has returned to the United States after being told not only would she not be selected for the Swedish EF syndicate in the Whitbread Round the World Race, a job given to her Swedish husband, but also that she would not be a watch leader.

Swimming

SWIMMING EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP (Biel, 15 days) (at 18:30) Tachonova (open) 6: 30, 35 31, 40 32, 45 33, 50 34, 55 35, 60 36, 65 37, 70 38, 75 39, 80 40, 85 41, 90 42, 95 43, 100 44, 105 45, 110 46, 115 47, 120 48, 125 49, 130 50, 135 51, 140 52, 145 53, 150 54, 155 55, 160 56, 165 57, 170 58, 175 59, 180 60, 185 61, 190 62, 195 63, 200 64, 205 65, 210 66, 215 67, 220 68, 225 69, 230 70, 235 71, 240 72, 245 73, 250 74, 255 75, 260 76, 265 77, 270 78, 275 79, 280 80, 285 81, 290 82, 295 83, 300 84, 305 85, 310 86, 315 87, 320 88, 325 89, 330 90, 335 91, 340 92, 345 93, 350 94, 355 95, 360 96, 365 97, 370 98, 375 99, 380 100, 385 101, 390 102, 395 103, 400 104, 405 105, 410 106, 415 107, 420 108, 425 109, 430 110, 435 111, 440 112, 445 113, 450 114, 455 115, 460 116, 465 117, 470 118, 475 119, 480 120, 485 121, 490 122, 495 123, 500 124, 505 125, 510 126, 515 127, 520 128, 525 129, 530 130, 535 131, 540 132, 545 133, 550 134, 555 135, 560 136, 565 137, 570 138, 575 139, 580 140, 585 141, 590 142, 595 143, 600 144, 605 145, 610 146, 615 147, 620 148, 625 149, 630 150, 635 151, 640 152, 645 153, 650 154, 65

Import overload

Ken Jones on England's lack of emerging talent, page 28

sport

Rodber's return

Lions announce team for first tour match, page 30



Leading the line: The Australian squad limber up under the glowing Yorkshire sky for the first one-day Texaco Trophy match at Headingley today

Photograph: David Ashdown

England have to take the initiative

Cricket

DEREK PRINGLE reports from Headingley

Michael Atherton, never previously one to be counted amongst the one-day game's fanatics, suddenly finds he has much to play for over the next four days. But if protecting an unbeaten home record as captain in Texaco Trophy matches would normally be motivation enough, the added incentive of grasping the initiative against the Australians ought to ensure that this series, which begins here today, will be anything but predictable.

Looking relaxed and clean-shaven at yesterday's press conference, the England captain

promised that despite Australia's decade-long dominance over their old rivals, none of his players would have an inferiority complex.

"Australia is one team we haven't played or beaten in this kind of trophy," Atherton said yesterday. "We are keen to get off to a good start and grasp the initiative for the rest of the summer."

"We have plenty of individuals who are capable of doing well. You will have to wait and see, but we do have plenty of guys who will entertain you on your holiday. I believe we'll be competitive this time. We just need a better start to the series than we've had in the past."

Such a wish may not be entirely hopeful, either. For one thing Australia, having lost out to the weather, appear under-prepared. But although their captain, Mark Taylor, claims it is not a concern, their recent defeat – itself a rarity inside these shores – on a slow seaming pitch at Worcester, did not benefit a side who had just beaten two of the toughest teams in world cricket.

Taylor, however, was optimistic. "We are ready," he said. "We came here with a lot of cricket behind us and we only had a few weeks off to recharge our batteries."

Headingley, a traditional haven for seam bowling until the pitch was relaid a few seasons

ago, may well be similar and revert to type, particularly if the heavy cloud cover of the last two days remains overhead.

If so, runs are likely to be eked out rather than plundered, the stage set for scrappers like Taylor, Atherton and Steve Waugh rather than the expansive strokeplay of Michael Slater and Alec Stewart.

Nick Knight, his injured finger recovered enough for him to field at slip, will open the innings with Atherton. Thereafter the Surrey trio of Stewart, Graham Thorpe and Adam Hobbins will form a middle-order that will probably be bolstered by John Crawley, preferred – at least initially – to Graham Lloyd, as the man

most likely to prevent Shane Warne spinning a run-tight web.

With Mark Ealham, Robert Croft and Phil DeFreitas likely to fill the numerous all-rounder roles, both Ben Hollis and Ashley Giles may have to wait a while longer before making their debut.

But while Taylor believes that advances in one-day cricket – such as pinch hitters – take it progressively further away from a game from Test cricket, England's early season pitches, with their slow movement, will help keep many of the time-honoured orthodoxes, such as line and length bowling, in place.

That said, Darren Gough will lead a bowling attack which will include either Dean

Headley or Chris Silverwood as the other specialist bowler. A plethora of all-rounders, including Croft's off-spin, will provide the remaining overs.

There is always the temptation to pick a bowler on his home ground and Silverwood may well get the nod. More likely, however, is that Dean Headley will take the new ball alongside Gough. At the age of 27, it is high time the selectors found out what Headley – so impressive amongst the colts for England A last winter – can really do in the company of wolves.

And some test it could be with Mark Waugh, Michael Bevan, Greg Blewett and Slater all keen to put bat to ball and rock

England's confidence. But despite their batting prowess, and the spectre of Warne, Taylor insisted that his side did not have a superiority complex.

"As I said when we arrived, it's nil-all at the moment. We can't just expect to win without doing the things that got us there in the past," Taylor said. "As Australians, we don't need much more motivation than being in an Ashes contest and you can be sure we'll be going flat out as of tomorrow. It will be nice to win the one-day series because the side that wins it comprehensively will carry a big psychological advantage into the first Test match."

With his own form under

more scrutiny than Atherton's was in Zimbabwe, Taylor, who feels he is at last beginning to hit the ball well, will be keen for a score as well as a win.

"I'm probably looking forward to this series more than anyone at the moment," he said after Australia's fielding practice yesterday. Knowing England's proclivity for bowling people back into form, I'll bet he is.

FIRST TEXACO TROPHY INTERNATIONAL (Headingley, today): England (from): M A Atherton (capt), N V Knight, A J Stewart (wicket-keeper), G P Thomas, J P Crawley, G O Lloyd, A J Hobbins, M A Ealham, R B Croft, D Gough, P A J DeFreitas, D W Headley, C E W Silverwood, B C Hollis, A F Giles. Australia (from): M A Taylor (capt), M E Waugh, S R Waugh, M G Bevan, G S Blewett, M J Slater, J A Healy (wicket-keeper), S K Warne, M S Kasprowitz, N Ganshope, G D McGrath, B P Johnson.

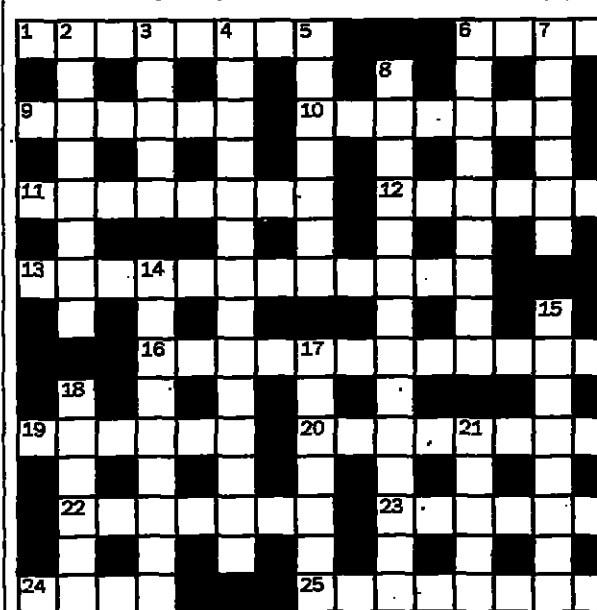
County cricket, page 28

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3305, Thursday 22 May

By Mass

Wednesday's solution



DOWN
1. A day out in one's schedule? (8)
2. Share's about right – or short (4)
3. Tin packed with mild fertilizer (6)
4. Was worthy of state service, having died (7)
5. Chap grumbled a Grade A filler (8)
6. Cash yours truly's invested in bond (6)
7. Not the best at setting up house (5-7)
8. One at counter ordered plain line in carpeting (12)
9. Bird or a couple audible by pen (6)
10. The cloth's becoming secular (8)
11. Flush borders in study (7)
12. Strolled, wandered off without leader (6)
13. Show teeth and gnash no end (4)
14. Nausea without question – then calm condition (8)
15. Insolvent, like many a soccer club? (2,3,3)
16. Yellow checked cotton mostly taken up (5)
17. Scrapes thousand in banking? (6,8)
18. Military type, one carrying a US arm reissued (7)
19. Boat, vessel, rounding a SW river (9)
20. Creature making nest in waste (6)
21. Good grief! Anything but! (9,5)
22. Fall gets Edward into trouble (9)
23. Waves run aboard vessels (8)
24. Huge pieces among rubble of semi (7)
25. Agree to take in a dog (6)
26. Handle? Lift with it (5)

Lee laments lack of praise for home grown players

Football

GUY HODGSON

You could be forgiven for thinking the England players have become a prosaic backcloth to show off the stellar talents of exotic foreigners. Take the Footballer of the Year award, for example. This year's winner was Gianfranco Zola, in 1996 it was Eric Cantona, in 1995 Jürgen Klinsmann.

It is enough to make a patriot weep, yet the players themselves are not convinced and not just because they are piqued at being overlooked in the rush to applaud the likes of Juninho, etc. Not a single overseas player featured in the Professional Footballers' Association's team of the season and Robert Lee, for one, believes that assessment is correct.

Indeed Lee, a team-mate of Faustino Asprilla, David Omana and Philippe Albert at Newcastle United, was positively gushing about the qualities of his compatriots as he prepared for England's friendly against South Africa at Old Trafford on Saturday. He insists his peers got it right to vote Alan Shearer player of the year and the football writers wrong to give their award to Zola.

"People underestimate how good English players are," Lee said. "They go on about the foreigners who have come over

here and done well. But look at the David Beckham, the Paul Gascoigne, and players like that. We've got players just as good."

"I didn't pick any foreigners in my team. Zola was outstanding in a lot of matches, but in some he went missing. Over a year I think the players got it right. Alan Shearer should have got the writers' award for what he did in the European Championships and for finishing top scorer despite missing a third of the season through injury. That was a remarkable achievement."

Lee, a midfield player who has forced himself to the forefront of Glenn Hoddle's thinking with compelling displays

against Mexico and Georgia in the last two months, fears that the English game might suffer in the rush to import mercenaries. "Some of the foreigners, like Zola and Juninho, are world-class players," he said. "The problem is that if you bring too many in who are not, then there's trouble for the young players coming through."

"We don't make enough of our own players. When you see a foreign player do something, like in the Cup final when Zola flicked it back for Newton to score, there's such a fuss. John Motson was going mad about that but Paul Gascoigne could have done that with his eyes shut. It was just a back flick."

As for Lee himself, his emergence from a player discarded

for Euro '96 by Terry Venables to England's best performer against Mexico has not diminished speculation he might leave Newcastle for London. His original contract at St James' Park included a get-out clause in case he got homesick and he has been linked with a move to West Ham as Kenny Dalglish starts his summer renovations.

Lee, who has two years left on his contract, said: "I've had speculation about wanting to go back to London since I was at Newcastle. It's out of my hands. If Kenny wants to sell me there's not a lot I can do about that. Ideally, I don't want to leave, with the European Cup coming up, and we're a very big

Hoddle impressed by Gascoigne

Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, is delighted with Paul Gascoigne's transformation into a picture of fitness. And now Hoddle hopes that his sleek figure is matched by a mental sharpness for the World Cup challenge in Poland in 10 days.

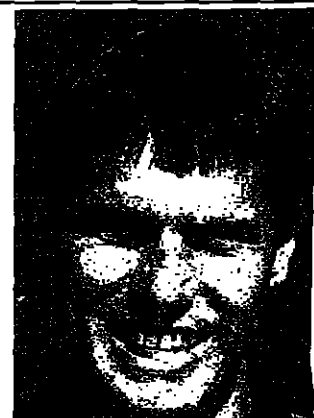
"He's looking as lean and fit as anything," said Hoddle, who had been critical of the Rangers player's lifestyle and approach as he battled back from injury.

With Paul Merson, Matthew Le Tissier and Steve McManama missing the match in Katowice, Gascoigne could be the hero again. He is set for his England comeback in the warm-up game against South Africa at Old Trafford on Saturday, six months after his last cap in Georgia.

He has a new look all-round. It is indicative that he has finally listened to Hoddle's ultimatum that he had to change or

pay the price. "His attitude is very good at the moment," Hoddle said.

"He's obviously given himself the best opportunity by getting himself back fit to stamp his authority on games when he plays. He hasn't exactly lost weight, he's now turned it into muscle, which is the best thing to do. He's done a lot of gym work." Gascoigne has also played seven testimonials in 15 days to get match sharp.



Lee: International revival

club. But it's not down to me any more.

"Nothing surprises me in football, except Eric Cantona retiring. Everybody knows there will be changes at Newcastle."

The fee for a Lee move is estimated at £2.5m, huge for a 31-year-old but, as he puts it, "cheap for an England player." He is delighted that his international career has been revived, having, this time last year, kicked his heels on England's Far East tour only to be omitted from Venables' squad.

"When I was left out I thought it was the end," he said. "It was a big blow. If I had expected it, I could have prepared myself for it. I played against Hungary and then I was due to play against China, but I was injured and told to rest my injury. I thought I was resting it for Euro '96 but it turned out I was resting for a lot longer."

"I feel as fit as I've ever been, a lot fitter than I probably was when I was at Charlton and a lot younger. I only moved into centre midfield three years ago and it's a new lease of life. It's like starting from scratch."

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